

81
Divine Breathings:

OR, A

PIOUS SOUL.

Thirsting after

CHRIST.

In a Hundred Pathetical

Meditations.

The SIXTEENTH EDITION, with
Additions.

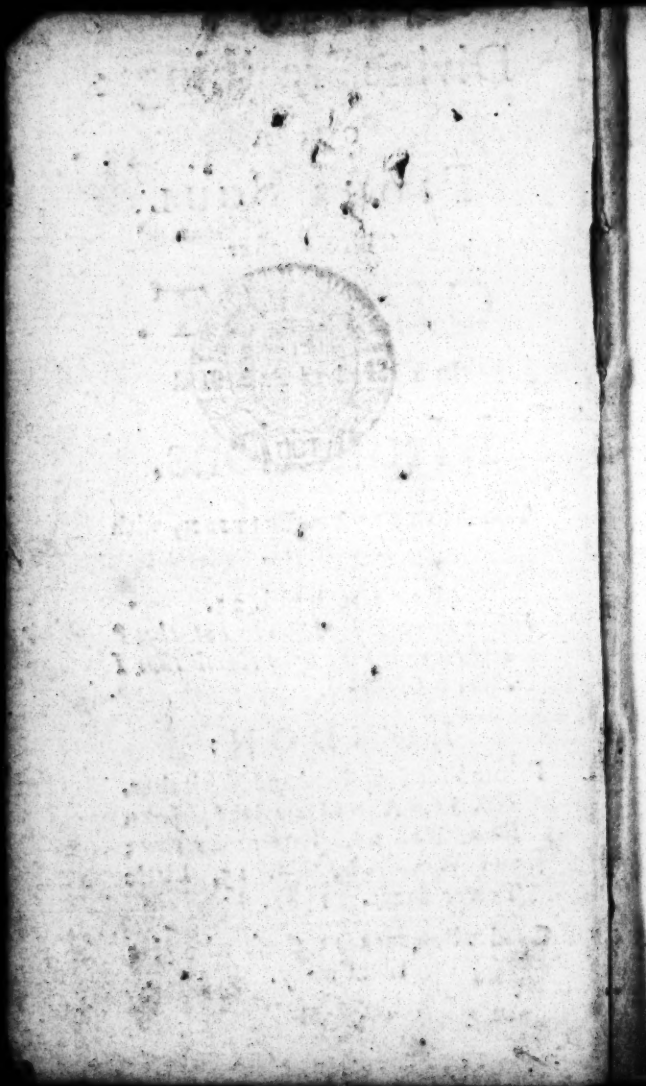
PSALM lxxiii. 25.

*Whom have I in Heaven but thee?
and there is none upon Earth that I
desire besides thee.*

L O N D O N :

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Good allowance to those who give
them away.





TO THE

Christian READER.

¶ ** ¶ E know that Christ
* W * accepted the wi-
* * dow's mite: this
orphan is to thee the zeal-
ous offering of its parent,
whose intention is to fur-
nish thee with holy desires,
which are a Christian's
wings to fly to heaven, and
therefore challenges thy ac-
ceptance. We have in
Holy Writ, the *Psalms* of
David left us for our exam-
ple,

To the Christian Reader.

ple, wherein we read his longing to be with God, desiring the wings of a dove, that he might fly away and be at rest ; and assimilating his thirsting after Christ to the hart, *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!*

Lo, here's one that hath learned by *David's* rules, and fain would have thee learn by his ; and doubtless, in imitation of that heavenly prophet, purposely penned these his pious ejaculations, to leave them for posterity,
to

To the Christian Reader.

to be a furtherance in the way to blifs.

And though the author's name is not prefixed, his piety these heavenly breathings speak; which being found by a person of no mean degree, among the writings of an eminent divine, have been by him communicated only to his dearest relations, as a celestial dove to carry the olive-branch of peace into their souls. It being my happiness to receive a copy, my own affections, for the good

To the Christian Reader.

of others, instantly inflamed my desires to publish it; and being seconded, not only by the approbations, but earnest solicitations of my friends, I have assented, and here presented it to thee; hoping thy devotions may hereby be raised, thy holy desires increased, and thy soul have a relish on earth, of the unspeakable joys in heaven. Which, that thou mayest have the fruition of, is the hearty prayer of,

Thy Cordial Friend,

CHRISTOPHER PERIN.



T H E
C O N T E N T S
O F T H E
Several Meditations.

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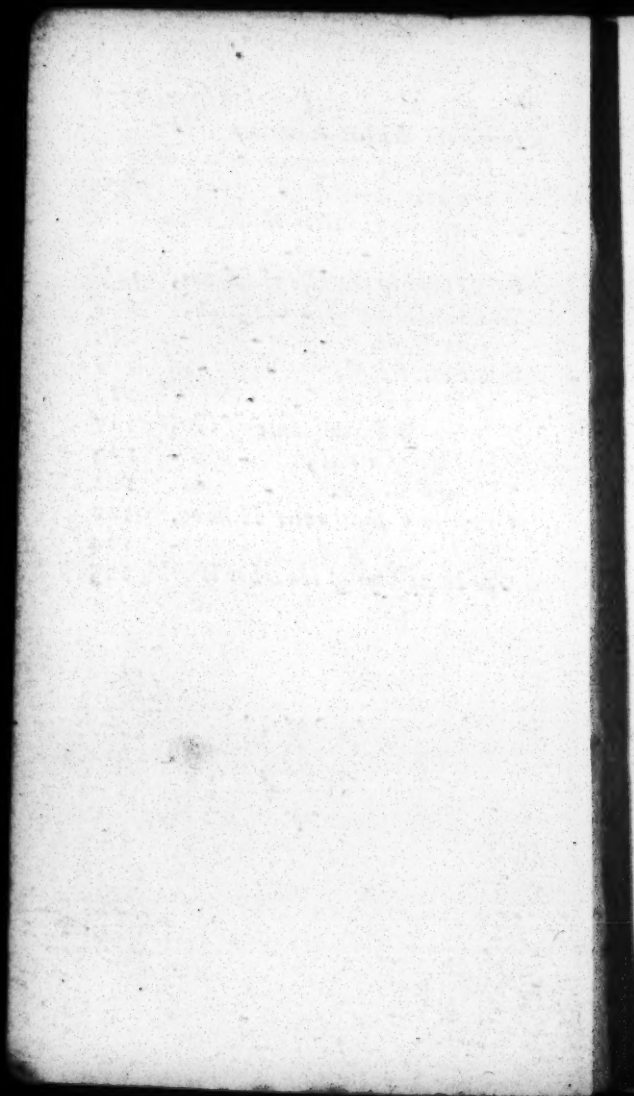
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Divine Breathings:

O R, A

PIOUS SOUL

Thirsting after

C H R I S T,

In Heavenly Meditations.

1. *Of Meditation and Prayer.*

MEDITATION and Prayer
are like the spies that went
to search the land of Ca-
naan; the one views, and the other
cuts down; and both bring home a
A taste

2 *Divine Breathings*

taste of the fairest and sweetest fruits of heaven. Meditation, like the eye, views our mercies; and Prayer, like the hand, reacheth in those mercies; or, Meditation is like a factor, which lieth abroad to gather in what we want; and Prayer, like a ship, goeth forth, and brings in what we desire. It is my misery, that I cannot be so perfect, as not to want; but it is thy mercy, that I cannot be so miserable, as not to be supplied. Meditation cannot find out a real want, but prayer will fetch in an answerable comfort. Lord! if mercy be so free, I will never be poor, but I will meditate to know it; never know it, but I will pray to supply it; and yet not rest until thou shalt do more for me, than I am able to ask or think.

*I'll neither poor nor yet slave be,
Since mercy is so rich and free:
I'll faithful live, looking for bless'd
relief,
Not fearful die in a curs'd unbelief.*

2. Contemplation.

S AINT *Bernard* sweetly compares contemplation to the eagle; for as the eagle is still fastening her eye upon the radiant beams of the beautiful sun, so contemplation is still viewing the glorious beams of the Sun of Righteousness; it is still conversant about the high and profitable things of salvation: or else, I may compare it to those birds of whom *David* speaks, who build their nests by the altar of God. This is that celestial bird, that builds her nest about the throne of glory. This is the bee which flieth into the sweetest gardens, and sucks honey from every flower of paradise. By meditation I can converse with God, solace myself in the bosom of my beloved, bathe myself in rivers of pleasures, tread the paths of my rest, and view the mansion of my eternity. What makest thou then, O my soul! in this valley of tears? Up upon the mount, and view the *Land of*

4 *Divine Breathings*

Promise. What makest thou in this wilderness of trouble? Up upon the wing, and take thy flight to heaven: Let thy thoughts be where thy happiness is, and let thy heart be where thy thoughts are: though thy habitation may be on earth, yet thy conversation shall be in heaven.

3. *The Nature of the Soul.*

WHAT art thou, O my soul!

A spiritual essence, an incorporeal substance, the very breath of God, and epitome of heaven. What satisfies thee? O my immortal soul! None but the immortal God, in whom all fulness dwells, he only can fill the soul, that fills heaven and earth. The insufficient creature may fill the soul with vexation; none but the all-sufficient God can fill the soul with contentation: O Lord, as no action of mine will satisfy thee without myself: so no creature of thine will satisfy me without thyself: therefore, O Lord,
take

of a Pious Soul. 5

take thou my heart, and give me
thyself.

*If nothing's known by thee but Christ
alone,*

It is sufficient, meditate thereon.

4. Desires of the Soul.

WHAT wantest thou? O my
soul! With what imaginable
excellency wouldst thou clothe thy-
self? What desirable object wouldst
thou pitch upon? Is it beauty? The
righteous shall shine forth as the
sun in the kingdom of heaven, and
the wise as the brightness of the fir-
mament for ever and ever. Is
it riches? Wealth and riches are
in the house of God; every one in
his family shall have a rich, a glo-
rious, an incorruptible and eternal in-
heritance amongst the saints. What
is it then? Is it honour? What ho-
nour like to this, to be a friend and
a favourite of God, and a spouse of
Christ? To have a crown of righte-
ousness, of life, and of glory? Yet
A 3 more,

6 *Divine Breathings*

more, a far more exceeding and *eternal weight of glory* set upon thy head. Yet again, Is it pleasure? The just shall enter into their master's joy, and there are rivers of pleasures at his right hand for evermore. In a word, What wouldst thou have? O my flesh! a confluence of all the glorious things both in heaven and in earth? Why godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come: If heaven, and the righteousness thereof, be the thing that thou dost seek; both heaven and earth, with the excellencies thereof, is that which thou shalt find. Lord, make me holy, and then I am sure I shall be happy.

5. *A Christian's End.*

WISE agents do always propound their ends before they set upon their work: and then direct their actions to that end they did propound. If the mariner launch, it is that he may get to such a harbour: therefore he sails by compass, that he

he may compass that he fails for. A Christian should have always one eye upon his end, and the other eye upon his way. That man lives a brutish life, that knows not what he lives for; and he acts but a fool's part, that aims at heaven, and lives at random. A wise Christian, his end of living is, that he may live without end; and therefore his way of living is, that he may live continually to spend his life in the ways of life; he is always walking in those paths where he sees heaven before him. O my soul! what is it that thou aimest at? Is it a full enjoyment of thy God? Why then, whilst thou art present in this body, be always drawing near to the Lord; so when thou shalt be absent from this body, then thou shalt be always present with the Lord.

6. A rich Worldling.

HOW apt many are at the sight of a rich worldling, to envy him for what he hath; but for my part, I rather pity him for what he wants;

8 *Divine Breathings*

wants: he hath a talent, but it wants improvement; he hath a lamp, but it wants oil; he hath a soul, but it wants grace; he hath the star, but wants the sun; he hath the creature, but he wants the Creator. In his life he doth float upon a torrent of vanity, which empties itself into an ocean of vexation; and after death, then take this unprofitable servant, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into utter darkness; go set his soul adrift for ever in an impetuous lake of fire and brimstone. Where now is the object of your envy? It is not his silver that now will anchor him, nor his gold that shall land him, nor his friends that can comfort him: therefore, if he be worth the envying, who is worth the pitying? If this be felicity, then give me misery. Lord! rather make me poor with a good heart, than rich with a bad conscience.

7. *Chris-*

7. *Christian's Choice.*

I AM frail, and the world is fading;
but my soul is immortal, and
God is eternal. If I pitch upon
the creature, either they may take
wings like an eagle that flieth to-
wards heaven, or my soul may take
its way with the rich fool, and go
to hell; but if I choose God for my
portion, then mercy and goodness
shall follow me whilst I live, and
glory and eternity shall crown me
when I die. I will therefore now
leave that which I shall soon lose,
that so I may embrace that which I
shall always enjoy.

8. *The Difference between good and
bad Men, with respect to this Life.*

I See the wicked have their heaven
here, and their hell hereafter;
and, on the contrary, good men have
their hell here, and their heaven
hereafter. *Dives* had his good
things in this life, and *Lazarus* evil;
now *Lazarus* is comforted, and
Dives

10 *Divine Breathings*

Dives is tormented. I will not therefore envy the prosperity of the wicked, nor be offended at the affliction of the righteous, seeing the one is drawn in pomp to hell, whilst the other swims in tears to heaven.

9. *Spiritual Joy and Sorrow.*

AS there is a sad mirth, so there is a joyful mourning; look upon the voluptuous man, however laughter may appear in his face, yet sadness ever centres in his heart; his carnal delights are not only vain, but vexing; like music they play him into a melancholy fit: whilst the banquet lasts, the sensualist sings; but when the reckoning comes, his spirit sinks, his burning candle presently goes out in a stinking snuff, his shining sun instantly sets in a watery cloud. *Solomon* gives us the sum of it thus: *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.* But now come to the penitential person; as his tears are the joy of angels,

angels, so they are the joy of his heart, and the solace of his soul; the salter his tears, the sweeter his comforts; the deeper his sighs, the fuller his joy; the beams of consolation always shine into this house of mourning, so that his soul is in travail with a *Barnabas*, and his labours bring forth the fruits of peace; insomuch, that I may truly say, To mourn for sin is to weep for joy. These pure and pleasant streams of consolation (which is the worldling's wonder) that flow and run in those crystal rivers of eternal pleasure, at God's right hand, they come from a weeping spring. Why then is the mouth of wickedness opened against the way of holiness? as if grace were the *Calvary* to intomb joys, and impiety the very womb to bring forth felicity; but if experience may be heard, my soul hath felt both, and I find such damps of spirit in worldly pleasures, and such refreshing of soul in the depth of godly sorrow, that I shall esteem one drop of such spiritual joy, better

12 *Divine Breathings*

ter than an ocean of their carnal mirth.

*What is't on earth can make us be
so jolly?*

*Like fools in grain, we laugh at
our own folly;*

*I'll laugh no more for mirth, but if
thou see*

*Me laugh, vain world, be sure it
is at thee.*

*Tbrice curs'd be wanton pleasure,
Hell's fine daughter,*

*That tickles me into such fits of
laughter:*

*Solace by laughter breaks forth to
excess,*

Outgoes itself, and turns to heaviness.

*Laughter's but the last blaze of
mirth full blown,*

*Our joys shall fade from greatest into
none.*

10. *The Soul's Happiness.*

WHERE thine happiness lieth,
there thy portion lieth: if thou
place thy felicity in a poor empty
creature: if with Judas the spirit run
so

so low, that thou canst be content only to keep the bag; or with *Reuben*, for some worldly convenience to quarter on this side *Jordan*: Why then, unworthy soul, take that which is thine own, and go thy way: If thou wilt be put off with a breath of honour, a blaze of pleasure, a snare of riches, or a parcel of vanity; why then go take thy fill; look for no more from God. Thou seest thy all; when thou goest from hence, then farewell all. In the mean while remember this, That when the breath shall be expired, the blaze extinct, and the soul for ever ensnared, then thy eternity shall be spent in bewailing thy folly: But now, O precious soul! if thou place thy felicity in the highest excellency, thy portion lies in the chiefest good: if it be thine happiness always to behold the beauty of God's face, it shall be thy portion for ever to behold the beauty of God's presence. Lord! let the worldling then be sent away with some poor worldly trifle; for my part, since thou hast made me capable of such heavenly excellencies,

B

14 *Divine Breathings*

cies, I desire never to be put off with transitory vanities; my happiness lies only in thyself, therefore, whatever I enjoy beside thyself, I will take it as a blessing, but not as a portion.

11. *Spiritual Desires.*

UNsatiabable desires in temporals make a poor man in spirituals; a right Christian is only rich in outward things, when he is contented with what he hath. That man hath nothing of heavenly things, that thirsteth not after more. Worldly desires always leave us empty; either we get not what we covet, or else we are not satisfied with what we get; but he that thirsteth after heavenly things is always filled, and the more he receives, the more he desires. The richest and choicest mercies that God can give, sincere desires will fetch them in. What a glorious improvement might we make of this affection, if we did but divert the stream, and turn them
heaven-

heavenward? How many excellent mercies lie aground, and only want this tide to bring them in? Why then let I my desires run on in waste? I do but make myself poor, in thirsting after more of the world, and more of the creature; whereas I might be rich, if I would but count more of grace and of Christ.

12. Deceitful Riches.

USually, when a worldling is dead, we ask, how rich he died? O! say many, he died rich; he hath left a great estate: Alas! the poor man hath slept his sleep, lost his dream, and now he awakes, he finds nothing in his hands: Where lies his golden heap? Only the rust of that heap is gone to witness against him; his Mammon fails him, only the unrighteousness of it follows him; others have the use of it, only the abuse of it he carries to judgment with him; he hath made his friends, (as we say) but he hath undone himself: So that I may justly write

16 *Divine Breathings*

this motto upon every bag, *This is the price of blood.* Shall I then treasure up the price of blood? No; Christ hath entrusted me, as a steward; therefore, what I have, and need not, Christ shall have in his members, that need, and have not. So the transitory creatures, when they shall slide away, shall not carry me with them; but when I shall pass away, I shall carry them with me.

13. *Misery of a wicked Man.*

GOOD Lord! what a miserable creature is a wicked man? His very manna turns to worms, his very mercies make him miserable. Look upon him in his larger estate, and you shall find either he hath not the benefit of enjoying it, only the danger of keeping it, and this adds not to his comfort; or else, if he doth enjoy it, he doth so miserably abuse it, that, as one saith well, he makes that which for use is but temporal, for punishment to be eternal.
Alas!

Alas ! the pleasures of it are quickly gone, but the pain of it lies in his bones for ever. Lord, therefore help me to improve thy mercies, or else thy mercies will but improve my miseries.

*There is no pleasure, 'tis all o'er a
cheat ;*

*'Tis gone when come, 'tis but a gay
deceit.*

14. *Book of Conscience.*

WOULDST thou know whether thy name be written in the book of life ? Why then read what thou hast written in the book of conscience. Thou needest not ask, who shall ascend up into heaven, for to search the records of eternity ; thou mayest but descend down into thine own heart, and there read what thou art, and what thou shalt be. Tho' God's book of election and reprobation be closed and kept above with God, yet thy book of conscience, that is open, and kept below in thy very bosom ; and what thou writest here, thou shalt be sure to read there.

18 *Divine Breathings*

If I write nothing in this book but the black lines of sin, I shall find nothing in God's book but the red lines of damnation: but, if I write God's word in the book of conscience, I may be sure God hath written my name in the book of life. At the great day of judgment, when all books shall be opened, there I shall either read the sweetest or the sharpest lines; I will therefore so write here, that I may not be ashamed to read hereafter.

*God's judgments do hang o'er our
heads, I fear,
For that I find e'en almost every
where,
Religion mostly in the tongue and
ear.*

. 15. *Dangerous Curiosity.*

BE not curious to search into the secrets of God; pick not the lock where he hath allowed no key. He that will be viewing every cloud, may be smitten with a thunder-bolt; and he that will be too familiar with
God's

God's secrets may be overwhelmed in his judgments. *Adam* would curiously increase his knowledge; therefore *Adam* shamefully lost his goodness: The *Bethshemites* would needs pry into the ark of God; therefore the hand of God slew above fifty thousand of them. Therefore hover not about this flame, lest we scorch our wings. For my part, seeing God hath made me his secretary, I will carefully improve myself by what we have revealed, and not curiously enquire into, or after, what he hath reserved.

*To us, and to our children, things
reveal'd*

*Do all belong, but not so things con-
ceal'd.*

16. *Death.*

NOTHING is so sure as death,
and nothing so uncertain as the
time: I may be too old to live, I can
never be too young to die; I will
therefore live every hour, as if I
were to die the next.

What

20 *Divine Breathings*

*What man is he that can put by
Death's dart,
If level'd once, and shot against his
heart ?*

17. Estate of a Man at Death.

AS the tree falleth, so it lieth;
and where Death strikes down,
there God lays out, either for mer-
cy or misery : so that I may com-
pare it to the Red Sea : If I go in an
Israelite, my landing shall be in glo-
ry, and my rejoicing in triumph, to
see all my enemies dead upon the
sea shore ; but if I go in an *Egyp-
tian*, if I be on this side the cloud,
on this side the covenant, and yet
go in hardened among the troops of
Pharaoh, justice shall return in its
full strength, and an inundation of
judgment shall overflow my soul for
ever. Or else, I may compare it to
the sleep of the ten virgins, of whom
it is said, *They slumber'd and slept* ;
we shall all fall into this sleep. Now,
if I lie down with the wise, I shall
go in with the bridegroom ; but if I
sleep

sleep with the foolish, without oil in my lamp, without grace in my soul, I have closed the gates of mercy upon my soul for ever. I see then this life is the time wherein I must go forth to meet the Lord ; this is the hour wherein I must do my work, and that the day wherein I must be judged according to my works. I know not how soon I may fall into this sleep ; therefore, Lord, grant that I live every day in thy sight, as I desire to appear the last day in thy presence.

*Small space there is 'twixt life and
death, we see ;
Yet on it hangs a double eternity.*

18. *Small Space between Life and
Death.*

WHAT is said of the mariner, in respect to his ship, that he always sails within four inches of death, that may be said of the soul, in relation to the body, that it is always within four inches of eternity;
If

22 *Divine Breathings*

If the ship splits, then the sailor sinks, if our earthen vessels break, the soul is gone, plunged for ever into the bottomless sea, and bankless ocean of eternity. This is the soul therefore that I desire to weep over, that shall preposterously launch into the deep, before he knows whether he shall sink or swim.

19. *Preparation for Death.*

IT was a sad speech of a dying king, *Nondum cæpi vivere, jam cogor vivendi finem facere*, I must now die before I begin to live. It is the sad condition of many a dying man, that their work is to do when their hour is come; when the enemy is in the gate, their weapons are to look for; when death is at the door, their graces are to look for; when the bridegroom is come, their oil is to buy; the pursuer of blood is upon them, and the city of refuge is not so much as thought of by them. In a word, the seven years of plenty are wasted, and no provision for the years of famine. Time is spent, and
nothing

nothing laid up for eternity. I will therefore now finish every work I have to do, that to die may be the last work I have to finish.

20. *Evil Age.*

THIS impudent age of ours is grown so eminently uncivil, that it is now-a-days counted one of the greatest shames to be ashamed of sin; but for my part, I had rather be accounted the world's fool, than God's enemy.

How dreadful is our Estate?

What dismal risks we run?

Must we be wicked if we're great?

And, if we're good, undone?

Sure no: God, who is good and wise,

Helps his such rocks to shun.

*What art thou, world, but winged
air?*

More swift and weak than fame;

Whose next successor is Despair,

And its attendant, Shame.

21. *Christian's Courage.*

Worldling, thou deridest to see a
Christian melted at the word
trembling

24. *Divine Breathings*

trembling at a sin: I tell thee he is of a noble carriage, he can triumph in death, and in judgment: It is not the king of fears that can appall him, or hell itself that can affright him; but as a conqueror over both, he can leave the world with a smile. *O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory?* That is his triumphant valediction and farewell: but thou that gloriest so much, because thou canst silence conscience, and out-face sin, I tell thee, thou art of a base cowardly spirit; let but a little sickness impair thy health, or the thoughts of death charge upon thy spirit, and what quick retreatings are there from thy bold resolutions? What heaviness clouds thy look? What terrors shakethy joints? What sadness sinks thy heart? so that a fancy frights thee, a shadow startles thee; *Nabal* like, thy spirits die, and sink within thee like a stone. Therefore jeer on; for my part, I hold it better to fear while God threatens, than to fall when God judgeth.

22. *The Soul's Communion.*

TH E nearer the moon draweth into conjunction with the sun, the brighter it shines towards the heavens, and the obscurer it shews towards the earth: so the nearer the soul draws into communion with Jesus Christ, the comelier it is in the eye of the spouse, and the blacker it appears in the sight of the world. He that is a precious Christian to the Lord, is a precise Puritan to the world; he that is glorious to an heavenly saint, is odious to an earthly spirit; but it is a sign thou art an *Egyptian* when that cloud, which is a light to an *Israelite*, is darkness to thee. It is a sign thou movest in a terrestrial orb, when thou seest no lustre in such celestial lights; for my part, if I shine to God, I care not how I shew to the world.

*Such candid Ethiops are seldom
seen:*

Fair people oft are Ethiops within.

C

23. *The*

26 *Divine Breathings*

23. *The Worth of a Christian.*

IT appears not what we are to the world, and it hardly appears what we shall be to ourselves; for did they know that we are jewels of God, the favourites of heaven, the excellency of the creation, the beloved of Christ, they would not mock and persecute us as they do; or if we did but know that we should be glorified together with Christ, his happiness shall be as our happiness, and that his joy shall be as our joys, and his glories shall be as our glories, truly we should not be so much dejected as we are: When I consider that my life is hid with Christ in God, I wonder not to see the world hate me; but when I consider that when Christ shall appear, I shall be like him, I wonder it doth so much as trouble me.

*Saints with inspir'd courage great
and brave,
Do bid defiance to the conquer'd
grave.*

Like

*Like to the Roman Scævola they
stand,*

*Batbing in flames their Salamander
band.*

*Yea, by that faith which does their
souls inspire,*

*They fearless go to be baptiz'd with
fire.*

24. Prosperity of the wicked.

WHY should I fret myself at the prosperity of the wicked? Indeed, when I look upon the spreading bay, and forget the withering herb; when I view their quails, and forget their curse; my feet had almost slipt; but since I went into the sanctuary of God, I find that all the blossoms of their glory must disflourish under the blastings of God's wrath; and all their external felicity doth but only perfect the judgments of the Lord, and fill up the measure of their misery: for what is their pleasure, but just like the deceitful salute of *Joab* with *Amasa*? What is their honour, but like *Absalom's* mule?

28 *Divine Breathings*

It only mounts and carries them to their gallows. What is their riches, but like *Jael's* present in a lordly dish? It only makes way for the fatal nail, for their sad account at the day of judgment. This their prosperity slays them. Now, who esteems that ox happy, that hath a goodly pasture to feed himself for the slaughter? Who envies that malefactor that hath a fair day to ride to execution in? And why is it, that the workers of iniquity flourish? Is it not that they may be destroyed for ever? And the larger their pasture, the sooner they are fitted for the slaughter. I therefore, for my part, when I see a sinner prosper in his wickedness, will turn the flame of envy into a tear of pity.

25. *A Christian's Heaven and Hell.*

THIS is heaven, to be for ever with the Lord; and this is hell, for ever to be without the Lord. You that can see no beauty in Christ, nor glory in heaven,
do

do you likewise see no flames in hell, no hell in loss of God? You therefore that cannot be taken with his presence, O tremble at his absence! and you that care not to be with, O fear to be without him! For this is hell on earth, *Depart from us*; and this is hell, when we leave the earth, *Depart from me*. Lord, thou art my heaven, and my happiness, unite me to thee, that I may be for ever with thee:

*O raise my thought, and ravish my
desire;*

*That so my spirit may up to heav'n
aspire.*

26. *The Use of Riches.*

THAT good which is in riches, lieth altogether in their use; like the woman's box of ointment, if it be not broken and poured out for the sweet refreshment of Jesus Christ in his distressed members, they lose their worth: therefore the covetous man may truly write upon his rusting heaps, *These are good for nothing*. Chrysostom tells us,

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That he is not rich that lays up much, but that lays out much; for it is all one, not to have, as not to use. I will therefore be the richer by a charitable laying out, while the worldling shall be the poorer, by his covetous hoarding up.

*Wealth (true) it looks at distance
fair;*

*Yet when we do approach,
Like fruit of Sodom 'twill impair,
And perish at the touch.*

*In being than in fancy less,
And we expect more than possess.*

27. *The Worldling's God.*

WHO will part with his God?

I will part with my life, rather than with my God. No marvel then the covetous man so hugs his gold, it is his God; if you take that from him, he may cry with *Micah*, when he lost his god, *What have I more?* His heaven is gone, his happiness is gone, his all is gone, if God be gone: I will not therefore wonder so much at the closeness of his hand, as at the vainness of his heart:

heart : we count it singular wisdom, to keep that God we choose ; but that is absolute folly, to choose that God we cannot keep.

28. *The Soul's Happiness.*

OH my soul ! thou art spiritual in thine essence, immense in thy desires, and immortal in thy nature ; so that there must be proportion and perfection of what thou enjoyest, with a perennity of both, or else no full content, no real satisfaction : now were the universal world turned into a pleasant *Eden*, and that *Eden* refreshed with the living springs of immortality, and thou seated in the throne of its choicest excellencies, crowned with the diadem of its highest felicities, swaying the sceptre of thy glory over all sublunary creatures ; nay, couldst thou give reins to the sun, or guidance to the moving flames ; did thy territories border upon the highest heavens, and the revenues of thy crown flow in from the farthest

30 *Divine Breathings*

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farthest parts of the earth; yet what proportion doth a material world bear to an immortal soul? Will a lion feed upon grass? Or can the soul be satisfied with dust? Thou mayest as soon feed thy body with grass, as thy soul with the creature; if it did bear proportion, yet it wants perfection: could the devil turn a chymist, and extract the very vital spirits and quintessence of the purest and desirablest excellencies under heaven, yet it is of such an imperfect nature, that there is more lees than liquor, more thorns than flowers, more smoke than fire, more sting than honey; so that the soul shall be filled with a whirlwind of vexation, that thinks to be satisfied with an object of imperfection; for it is impossible that such a scanty excellency should any ways fill such an enlarged capacity. Yet again, were there perfection, yet there is not perpetuity; it will fly away like a bird from the perch, or melt away like ice before the sun, and so leave the immortal soul to sink for ever;

so that the creature will not only make thee restless, but leave thee miserable: I see then, that I shall never rest, till I rest in God; he that is the Father of spirits, the fountain of bliss, the ancient of days, he only is the adequate object for thine immortal soul: the rest of the creatures is in its end, the end of the soul is its God. Therefore, Lord, seeing thou hast made me for thyself, fill me fully with thyself, or take me wholly to thyself.

29. The Vanity of the World.

DOTH Satan tempt thee, either by pleasures, dignities, or profits? O my soul! stand upon thy guard, gird on thy strength with such thoughts as these. What can the world profit me, if the cares choak me? How can pleasures comfort me, if the sting poison me? Or what advancement is this, to be triumphing in honour before the face of men here, and to be trembling for shame before the throne of
God

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God hereafter? What are the delights of the world, to the peace of my conscience, or the joy that is in the Holy Ghost? What are the applauses of men, to the crown prepared by God? Or what is the gain of the world, to the loss of my soul? The vanity of the creature is far beneath the excellency of my soul. Therefore, Satan, you and I must keep at an everlasting distance, for you bid me loss.

*This world is nothing, nothing 'tis
at all,*

*Or when 'tis most, 'tis as a Tennis
Ball.*

30. *The Christian Traveller.*

A Black cloud makes the traveller mend his pace, and mind his home; whereas a fair day, and a pleasant way, wastes his time, and that stealeth away his affections in the prospect of the country: however others may think of it, yet I take it as a mercy, that now and then some clouds do interpose my
sun,

fun, and many times some troubles do eclipse my comforts : for I perceive, if I should find too much friendship in my inn, in my pilgrimage, I should soon forget my Father's house, and my heritage.

*The Christian who does travel for
to know
Himself and God, he need no further go.*

31. *The World's Hatred to living Saints.*

THERE is a generation of men, that will praise and adore the saints in heaven, and yet mock and afflict the saints on earth ; so that were all those saints alive again, whom they so much honour in their day, I dare affirm, they would persecute them in their persons : like the *Jews*, they can garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and yet play the *Jew* with the person of the righteous. Dissembling world, thy tongue embalms a dead saint, whilst

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whilst thy hand strikes a wound into the living saints, and thou canst praise God for those that are departed in the faith, and yet persecute God in those that will not depart from the faith. O foolish world! must thou needs condemn thyself, for thy praise hath left thy practice without excuse.

*Each age by lies so basely is deceiv'd,
That truth when told is hardly e'er
believ'd;*

*Thus truth from error men do scarcely
know,*

*Lies in fine phrases so like truth do
shew.*

32. *The best Treasures.*

ALEXANDER being asked where he would lay his treasure? answered very well, *Apud Amicos*, among his friends; being confident, that there it would be kept with safety, and returned with use. What needest thou enlarge thy barns? Knowest not thou where to lay thy plenty? Make the friends of Christ thy treasury, let the hands of the widow,

widow, the bowels of the poor, be thy store-house; here it is sure, no thief can steal it, no time can rust it, no change can lose it, and here it is improved. A temporal gift is here turned into an eternal reward; no ground so fruitful as the bosom of the poor, that brings forth an hundred-fold.

33. *The World's Worthlessness.*

O My soul! what makest thou grovelling on the earth? Every thing here below is too base for thine excellency, too short for thine eternity: thou art capable of God, and must have a being when these poor creatures are reduced to nothing: the creature is too base a metal to make thee a crown of glory, too rotten a bottom to carry thee through eternity. O fill thyself with God, so shalt thou raise thy dignity to perpetuity.

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*No comfort true, worth bappin's
below,
Grief but gives back to fetch the
harder blow ;
I would have mortals this and better
things to know.*

34. *A Christian's Circumspection.*

WHERE any thing presents itself, think if Christ were now alive would he do it? Or, if I were now to die, would I do it? I must walk as he hath walked, and I must live as I intend to die ; if it be not Christ's will, it is my sin ; and if I die in that sin, it will be my ruin : I will therefore in every action so carry myself, as if Christ were on the one hand, and death on the other.

35. *Live with respect to Eternity.*

OUR life is but a moment of time ; and yet in this moment of time we sow the seeds of eternity ; in this transitory hour I am fram-

framing to myself either a good or a bad eternity. These words that now I speak, these works that I now act, though they here seem to rot, yet they shall spring up to eternity. Therefore as the poet answered one upbraiding him for being three days about three verses, whereas he could make an hundred in one day: O! saith he, *At tui triduum modo, mei in omne æternum duraturi sunt*: Thine are but for three days as it were, but mine must continue for ever; according to my carriage now, my name must either rise or fall for ever. So may we answer this foolish world upbraiding us of too much strictness and preciseness. O! had not we need to be exact indeed, when the works we are about are not to be written in sand, but in the records of eternity: the lines that now we draw must run parallel with eternity; and according as we carry ourselves in this moment of time, our souls must live or die for ever. O Lord! help me to improve the brevity of my life, by the integrity of my
D 2 actions,

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actions, that I may turn this moment of misery into an eternity of bliss.

36. The happy Lives of the Blessed.

THE soul of man (saith the philosopher) is the horizon of time and eternity : now if the sun of righteousness be not risen in our horizon, we must expect nothing but a clouded time, and a stormy eternity ; gross darkness here, and utter darkness hereafter for ever. But as for those blessed Saints, into whose souls the oriental splendor of the sun of righteousness is shed abroad, how do they live in his sight ? What celestial excellencies ! what reviving comforts ! what advancing principles are darted forth from the face of beauty into their spirits ! And as for the triumphant Saints, in whose horizon Jesus Christ is in the eternal meridian of his glory ; O what full beams of bliss and consolation, without the least shadow of bitterness and discontent,
warms

warms and delights their blessed souls to all eternity ! Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance in my horizon, so shall time be the morning, and eternity the noon of glory in my soul.

37. *The Worldling's mean Choice.*

THE world hath many servants, because it gives present wages ; where Christ hath but a few disciples, because their reward is in another life : Most live by sight, and therefore must have to satisfy sense ; they had rather with *Ismael* be sent away with a small gift, than with *Isaac* to wait for the inheritance ; they had rather take their portion in this life, than to wait for an inheritance reserved in the heavens. Their unworthy spirits cry with *Esau*, *What profit will this birth-right do us ?* We must have pleasure, and we must have riches ; and therefore, with *Lyfimachus*, they will sell their kingdoms, and themselves for a draught of water. There are but few such elevated spirits as the

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disciples had, that can leave a possession to live upon a promise; there are but few have such heroic spirits as *Moses* had, that can despise the treasures of this present world, out of respect unto the recompence of a future reward: But there are many of such sordid spirits as *Dives* had, that would enjoy their good things here; but for my part, Lord! give not me my portion in this life, I had rather live by faith.

38. *The Rebellious Sinner.*

WHAT rebel under proclamation of mercy stands out, when he knows he shall be fetched in by the hand of justice? Yet how many refractory sinners (with those invited guests in the Gospel) deride the messengers of peace, until they are slain by the men of war. Indeed hadst thou counsel, wisdom and strength for the battle; could thy heart endure, or thy hands be strong in the day that God shall deal with thee, this were much;

or

or could the gods whom thou serveſt deliver thee out of the hands of Chriſt, this were more. But, alas! thou muſt one day be brought under his regal power, either in favour or fury, either in the praiſe of his glory, or to the magnifying of his juſtice. If thou hate his throne, thou ſhalt be made his footſtool: If thou wilt not have him to be thy head, thou ſhalt be trod under his feet: If he be not thy Jeſus, he will be thy judge. In a word, if thou wilt not touch the golden ſceptre of his mercy, thou ſhalt be cruſhed with the rod of his juſtice; and remember this, that this life is only the time of diſplaying the flag of mercy, and the burning of the taper of peace: If once the white flag be folded up, and the burning taper burnt out; then look for nothing but the ſad flouriſhes of the black flag. *As for thoſe mine enemies that would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me.* Therefore now ſit down, and ſee thy weakneſs, and while the King is yet a great way

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way off, send out the ambassadors of thy prayers and tears, and acquaint thyself now with God, and be at peace. For my part, I had rather come in a favourite, than be brought in a traitor.

39. *The Benefit of Repentance.*

SIN and sorrow are two inseparable companions; thou canst not let in one, and shut out the other: If thy moments be spent in mirth, thy eternity shall be spent in mourning. If thou wilt not weep, whilst thou mayst have mercy to pardon thee, thou shalt lament hereafter, and yet have no eye to pity thee. A bottle of tears may now quench the fire of sin, but a cloud of tears shall never quench the flames of hell; therefore, while the wicked go on laughing, I desire to go on mourning. The valley of *Boschim* will at length set me upon the hill of *Sion*; but the paths of rejoicing will at length bring into a hell of weeping; for this is a truth, That
he

he that swims in sin, shall sink in sorrow; their laughter shall be turned into heaviness, while my tears shall be wiped away: I will therefore ever weep, that I may not weep for ever.

40. *As we live, so we die.*

THAT way the tree inclineth, while it groweth, that way it pitcheth when it falleth; and there it lies, whether it be toward the North or South. As we are in life, for the most part, we are in death; so we lie down to eternity, whether it be towards heaven or hell. Being once fallen, there is no removing; for as in war, an error is death; so in death, an error is damnation: Therefore live as thou intendest to die, and die as thou intendest to live. O Lord! let the bent of my soul be always towards thee, that so I may fall to thee, and ever rest with thee.

41. *The*

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41. *The miserable End of prosperous Wickedness.*

JORDAN, that famous river, no doubt, runs through many a pleasant meadow, by many a shady grove and flowery bank; and yet at last is forced to empty itself into a dead sea; and not only so, but those fresh crystal streams, that made those famous brooks lose both name and worth, are turned into the dead sea themselves. Just so it is with a wicked man; here he walks through the meadows of worldly pleasures and rest, under the shades of earthly comforts and sports, and wallows himself amongst the flowers of worldly delights, but at last runs himself out into a dead lake, and is cast into hell among the number of those that forget God; and not only so, but this very heaven itself, that made up all his happiness, is turned into hell, his beauty is turned into horror, his honour into shame, his lust into devils, his pleasure into bitterness, his scars let into flames
of

of fire and brimstone; so that that which was his fresh stream here, is his salt-sea there. Lord! let me be a pure stream, that may end in heaven. I care not what stony veins I run through here on earth, so I may but there lose the name of weakness and corruption, for glory and perfection.

Who is no monster does a monster seem,

'Tis only prosperous vice men virtue deem.

The world's a monster, in whose will's a hell,

Where passions, devil-like, tormenting dwell;

Where flatter'd senses, placed in array,

The soul's ruin menace, and our life's decay,

*Lord, help me but to get hence well,
I'll dread no way.*

42. *The Worldling's Folly.*

WHAT's a day to an age? and
what is an age to eternity?
And yet we know the shortest day
is

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is part of the longest time, but the longest time is no part of eternity; for where time ends, there eternity begins. Why are we then so foolish to heap up goods for mortality, to lay up riches, which, at longest, are but for many years, perhaps not for many hours; and yet to provide nothing for eternity? And why are we so careful to humour and uphold a mouldering piece of clay, a frail and mortal body, which cannot stand above an age, perhaps not above a day, and yet neglect our precious souls, that must endure for ever? Do we all aim at a prosperous life? Why then let us labour for a glorious eternity.

The works of darkness in our earthly mind,

*Have made our eyes like moles,
earth's pismires blind.*

43. *No Happiness without Holiness.*

ALL men would have happiness for their end, but few would have holiness for their way. All men would have the kingdom of heaven,

heaven, and the glory thereof, but few seek the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof. As that nobleman being asked, What he thought of the course of precise Puritans (as the world terms them) or of the life of licentious Libertines? answered, *Cum istis mallem vivere, cum illis mori mallem*: I had rather live with these, and die with those. So most men would rather live with *Balaam*, but die with *Israel*. They would willingly have the libertine's ease, but the godly man's end: But this is certain, no soul shall go to God in death, but only that which draws near to God in life. If the kingdom of God be not first in us, we shall never enter into the kingdom of God; no soul shall rest in heaven hereafter, but those that walk in heaven here; no soul shall enter into the gates of felicity, but only that which treads the narrow paths of piety. Lord! make me holy, as well as happy, that I may love as well to glorify thee, as to be glorified of thee.

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44. *The Delay of Repentance dangerous.*

THERE be many to-morrow Christians, that set their day with God, At such a day they will repent, and not before; as if they had the lordship of time, and the monopoly of grace; whereas time and grace are only at God's disposing. As St. *Ambrose* saith, *Pœniten-
tenti indulgentiam, sed dilaturo diem
crastinum non promisit*; God hath promised pardon to the penitent, but he hath not promised to-morrow to the negligent. As St. *Augustine* saith, *Qui dat pœniten-
tenti veniam, non semper dabit peccanti pœniten-
tiam*; He that gives pardon to the penitent, doth not always give repentance to the sinner: if I put God off to-day, he may put me off to-morrow; if I put off this hour of grace, I may never have another gracious hour: to-day if I put by his hands of mercy, to-morrow he may stretch out his hand of justice.

tice. It is true, whilst I have time, I may come in ; but it is also true, when I would come in, I may not have time. This is certain, when I repent, I shall have mercy ; but this is as certain, when I would have mercy, I may not find repentance. O Lord, thou hast given me this hour of grace to repent in, give me grace in this hour to repent with.

*Though true repentance never be too
late ;*

*Yet late is seldom true ; such is its
fate.*

45. *The Vanities of Human Life.*

GOOD Lord! what a shadow is the life of man? what a nothing is it? The time past, that is nothing, just like a bird fled from the hand of the owner, out of sight. The time present, that is a vanishing, a running hour ; nay, less, a flying minute, as good as nothing. The time to come, that is uncertain ; the evening-sun may see us dead.

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Lord! therefore in this hour make me sure of thee; for in the next I am not sure of myself.

46. *The Life of Faith.*

ALEXANDER, when he had divided his wealth amongst his friends, and being asked, What he had reserved for himself; answered, *Hope*. He is a rare Christian indeed that can part with all for Christ, and live by faith: but when it comes to this, that we must lose what we have here, out of hope to find it again in heaven, the running professor stops, and goes back sorrowful. *Crates*, in his way to philosophy, threw his goods into the sea to save himself, saying, *Ego vos mergam, ne ipse mergar a vobis*; I had rather drown you, than that you should drown me; for he thought that riches and virtue were incompatible. But how many Christians are there, that in their way to Jesus Christ, throw away themselves and their souls, to save their gold? Before they will cast their bread upon
the

the water, they will throw themselves into the ocean. Many that make such specious shews of following of Christ, in this same turning you may know their master: but this is a truth; he hath no part at all in Christ, that will not part with all for Christ: and he lives but the life of sense, that cannot make a living out of a promise. Therefore, Lord, of what I have, freely take thou what thou callest for: Christ is my portion and reward, I have enough to live on.

47. A Christian's Treasure.

WHEN I look into the treasures of men, perhaps I see chests of plate, bags of gold, cabinets of jewels; but this is the misery of it, that when he goes abroad, he cannot carry them without a burden, or leave them without a fear. But here now is the excellency of a child of God, that his treasure is always in him; and it is happiness to carry it always with him, that, as it is transcendent for riches, being the

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fulness of God ; so it is likewise permanent for continuance, because he is filled with that fulness, insomuch that you may sooner rend his soul from his body, than take his treasure from his soul. This was that which sweetened the loss of country, house, and friends, to *Ovid* in his exile: the thoughts of his *Genius*, the riches of his ingenuous spirit was beyond the reach of *Cæsar's* malice ; and this is that which refresheth the spirit of a Christian in all troubles and afflictions, that he meets with in the land of banishment ; he hath the possession of Jesus Christ, whom he can never lose. O the excellency of a child of God ! Though you cast him out of all, yet you cannot cast any thing of this all out of him : but as *Bias*, that princely philosopher, said, when he lost his city, and was put to flight, being asked by those that fled with him, with their bag and baggage, Why he likewise took not something with him ? answered, *Omnia mea mecum porto*, I carry all my riches with me ; meaning his wisdom and virtues :

virtues: so a Christian, though you impoverish him, banish him, and cast him out of all; yet he is able to say still, *Omnia mea mecum porto*, I carry all my treasure with me, I have my Christ, my fulness. And truly, Lord, so thou wilt possess me with this All, I care not, though I am dispossessed of all.

48. *The Day of Grace.*

LEGAL days were but like winter days, dark and cloudy, sharp and stormy: and yet how many of our fathers travelled to heaven in those days! But gospel times, they are like summer days, sweet and clear, full of light and beauty, so that we may truly say that God hath not been as a cloud of darkness to us; for these are the days of grace that are full of the beams of mercy: yet how slowly and sadly do many of us go to heaven? But, which is worse, how sadly and slightly do we waste these precious days, and neglect these golden

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golden opportunities? O, what time shall that soul find to repent in, that shall be hardened in these melting times! O, what days shall that soul find to go to heaven in, that shall idle away these gospel-days! O, what grace shall that man find for sin, that shall sin away the day of grace! O, to whom shall that soul appeal, that shall renounce Jesus Christ! O, woe unto that soul for ever, upon which the shadows of death and of the evening are stretched out, and yet never set forth for heaven! but woefuller is that man, to whom the clearer and sweeter day doth only make the blacker and the sadder hell. O, what blackness of darkness is reserved for that soul that shall walk in darkness, in the midst, and under such clearness of light! We are those that are not only lifted up to heaven, but heaven is let down to us. O, how long shall that man lie in hell, that heaven presseth down! O, thou Gospel-Christian! thou art now under the clear demonstrations of Christ,
the

the sweet invitations of mercy, the large manifestations of love; look to it, thou shalt go either to heaven or to hell, upon the easiest or hardest terms.

*We fight like two fierce combatants
that meet,
To get a trophy or a winding sheet.*

49. *A sixfold Voice of Warning.*

MEthinks I hear six voices cry aloud: the first voice is of dying men. The second is the voice of the damned. The third is the voice of my precious soul. The fourth is the voice of Jesus Christ. The fifth is the voice of evil times. The sixth is the voice of the day of judgment. First, Methinks I hear a dying man breathing out these groans; O, lose not a moment of time; for thy time is but a moment! O, now make sure of heaven, for thou knowest not how soon thou must leave the earth! And then methinks I hear the damned man roaring forth these lamentations:

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tations: O, come and see the end of sin, in these that know no end of sorrow! O, come and learn the price of time, from those that must for ever suffer for the loss of time! And then, methinks I hear my precious soul using these expostulations: O, my body! what a fool am I to satisfy thy lusts! thou art but for a moment of time, but I must endure for ever; when thou art wrapt up in rottenness, where shall I spend my eternity? I might now get heaven for my mansion, angels for my companions, God for my possession; and dost thou think I will lose my felicity to satisfy thy vanity? Is it not better, that I should carry thee to heaven, than that thou shouldst carry me with thee to hell? And then methinks I hear Jesus Christ using these invitations: Behold, I stand at the door and knock, till my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night; here I stand weeping, knocking, begging, and waiting; O, open to me! My tears beg, my fears knock, my blood knocks, my groans knock,
O,

O, open to me! my patience knocks and waits! O, open to me! Let not sin lodge in thy heart, and Christ wait at the door; let not damnation rule within, and salvation wait without. And then methinks, evil times use their invitations; O, now be living Christians, for these are dying days! O, now be groaning Christians, for these are backsliding times! O, now make Jesus Christ thine own, for here thou knowest not what is thine own! And then lastly, methinks I hear the voice of the Archangel, summoning the dead to come forth to judgment: Arise, ye holy and blessed saints, take your places with God and his holy angels, to judge the world; arise, ye cursed naked souls, and take your standing in the sight of God, and of his blessed saints, to be judged as you lived in the world. O Lord, let me hear with fear the first voices, that I may not fear to hear the last voices!

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50. *The Devout Soul's Choice, or Portion.*

IN every choice, we cannot take, except we leave: That soul that chooseth life and grace, refuseth all things else. This is the heavenly breathing of such a gracious spirit; Lord! let vain men follow vain fashions, but clothe me with salvation, and cover me with the robes of righteousness: let them be all glorious without, but let me be all glorious within; let them crown themselves with rose-buds, but crown me as thou dost thy church, with the stars of heaven; these shall shine when those shall fade. Let the wicked go away with the world; let them have all the sweetness, beauties, glories, and excellencies of the earth; but let Jesus Christ be my portion; there all things else are nothing at all, where Christ is all in all. Therefore, be serious, O my soul! for thou hast none of Christ,
until

until thou canst truly say, *None but Christ.*

51. *A threefold awakening Consideration.*

THREE things (methinks) should make the heart of a Christian to tremble. First, To consider the brevity of their life. Secondly, The difficulty of their work. Thirdly, The eternity of their end. Our life is but a withering flower, a flying cloud, a vanishing shadow, a perishing breath; the body returneth to the dust, and the soul goeth suddenly to its long home; the night instantly cometh when no man can work; but now, what work is to be done in this short inch of time? Great enemies to be conquered, sons of *Anak* to be killed, principalities and powers to be overpowered, dear lusts to be subdued, right eyes to be plucked out, right hands to be cut off, strict rules to be followed, a narrow way and strait gate to go through; to sum it
F up,

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up, a long race to run with a short breath, a great way to be gone by a setting sun : but then, what are we to expect when this taper is out, this breath is expired ? Even as we have sowed, so to reap ; either to be eternally crowned, or eternally damned : now therefore, before the sun be set, or the shadow of the evening be stretched out, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.* O Lord ! help me so to work for thee, in this moment of time, that I may for ever rest with thee, when time shall be no more.

52. *The Loveliness of Christ.*

YOU have heard of the bloody siege of *Troy*, and yet it was said of *Helen*, that she was so beautiful, that she deserved ten years war more ; and what was *Helen*, but a glorious heap of clay ? You have heard of the hard labours of *Jacob*,
yet

yet *Rachel* was so amiable in his eyes, that he thought her worthy of fourteen years service; if these deserved so much, O! what doth Jesus Christ deserve? who is altogether lovely; before whose shining glory the beauty of the whole creation is but an indigested chaos. Therefore be not discouraged, O my soul! though thine enemies be fierce, their assaults cruel, thy resistance even unto blood; thou fightest for a beautiful Christ, that deserves it: neither be disheartened, O my soul! though rules be strict, duties hard, thy labours great, thou serveest for an amiable Christ, that will sufficiently reward it. Look but upon the lovely beauties of thy Christ, think but upon the glorious day of thine espousal, and these fourteen years will be nothing to thee; Lord, let me always have thy beauty in mine eye, so shall I quickly find no difficulty in my hand.

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53. *The Pleasure of a religious Life.*

I Have formerly (with the world) accounted the spirit of a Christian, to be a melancholy spirit ; and the ways of holiness only unpleasant paths, leading to the desarts of sad retiredness. But now I see they have hidden manna, which the world knows not of ; glorious joys, which strangers do not meddle with, and the closer and exacter they walk, the fuller and sweeter are their joys : formerly the very thoughts of parting with my pleasures and delights, to embrace soul-humbling, self-denying duties, were grievous to me : but now, I bless my God, I can say with *Augustine*, *Quam suave suavitatibus istis carere !* O, how sweet is it to want my former sweetness ! It is now my rejoicing to be without my former joys ; for now I see there is a heaven in the way to heaven, and that one look of faith's, one smile of Christ's, one glance of heaven, one grape of *Canaan*, one glimpse of
of

of my crown of glory yields more sweetness, comfort, and content than all the pleasures and delights the world affords; the very gleaning of spiritual joy is better than the vintage of carnal delights; let no man then stand off for want of pleasures, for here he shall not lose them, only change them.

54. *No Satisfaction in the Creature.*

SOLOMON tried many conclusions, but not one took but the last, *The fear of God.* O my soul! thou mayest tire thyself with variety of objects, but none satisfies but this, the fruition of thy God; he only is the plenary and primary goodness, he only is the efficient and sufficient fulness; as it was said of manna, that it was the delight of every palate, so it may be said of Jesus Christ, that he is satisfaction to every soul: taste therefore, and see how sweet the Lord is. What is the reason we wander after such variety of creatures? Because we cannot

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find sufficiency in one; were one herb as virtual, or one flower as delectable as the collection, we should never trouble ourselves to gather many. Take up then thy rest, O my soul! in the chiefest and choicest good, which comprehends all other goods. Those golden rays of goodness, which lie scattered in the creature, are only to be found conjunctively in God; those pure ingredients, which go in to make up the highest excellency, largest goodness, fullest perfection, are only to be found collectively in him. Knowest thou any thing profitable, delectable, or desirable in the creature? Thou mayest see it in thy God, find it in thy Christ. Art thou captivated? He is thy Redeemer. Art thou wounded? He is thy good *Samaritan*. Art thou broken-hearted? Go unto Christ, and he will bind it up: Art thou sick? He is thy physician: Art thou persecuted? He is thy refuge: Art thou hungry or thirsty? He is the living bread, and the flowing stream: Art thou weary? He is thy rest: Art thou in want or poverty?

poverty? He is an inexhaustible treasury: Art thou in disgrace or contempt? Why, he is thy honour: Art thou dull and heavy? He is a quickening spirit: Wouldst thou have grace? He is the fountain: Wouldst thou have heaven? He is the way; he shall guide thee by his counsel, and after receive thee to glory. Let that man's name therefore be written in the dust, that leaves the flowing fountain, to quench his thirst at a broken cistern. Why should I tire myself to gather drops of honey from so many dying flowers, when I can satisfy myself with streams of sweetness in the living Christ? Therefore, creatures, in this you and I must part, for Christ outbids you all.

*Praise, honour, riches, earthly glory,
Like man, are pilgrims transitory;
Till the nights of ignorance decline,
These glow-worms seem to him to shine.*

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55. *The Knowledge of Christ.*

A Christian may raise another paradise here below, may make a lower heaven on earth : For this is life eternal, to know thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. To know Christ in the evidence of his love revealed to us ; and Christ revealed in us, is the very entrance of heaven ; for what is the perfection of grace, but the fulness of his knowledge ? And what is the consummation of his glory, but the blessedness of his fulness ? Therefore, Lord, be every day adding to my knowledge, that so at my last day I may be perfect.

56. *Divine Love,*

GODLY sorrow, like weeping *Mary*, seeks Christ ; saving faith, like wrestling *Jacob*, finds and holds Christ ; heavenly love, like the affectionate spouse, dwells with Christ ;
here

here it brings him into the chambers of the Queen, and hereafter brings the loving soul into the chamber of the King; so that it is an eternal grace, always lodging in the bosom of Christ. Lord, thou art the desire of my soul: O! that I could seek thee, find and love thee, that I may for ever enjoy thee.

57. Godly Sorrow.

THE stream of sorrow, like waters, ascends no higher than the spring from whence it came. We know that sin gives two bloody stabs; the first is at the soul of man, the second is at the heart of Christ: and if the first stab only grieve me, if I mourn for sin, as it hath only wounded my soul, it is a sign this stream flows from a natural heart, because it ascends up to a natural height: but if I weep for sin, as it hath wounded Christ, as it hath shed that blood that would save me, as it hath pierced that heart that would love me, then no question
but

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but the spring is in heaven ; because it riseth to a supernatural ascent. Lord, that my sorrow may be found, pierce my heart for sin, as it strikes through my soul, and pierces Christ.

58. *Christ to be preferred above all.*

MY life is sweet, but my Christ must be sweeter to me than my life. My soul is precious, but Christ must be dearer to me than my soul : my salvation is much, but Christ must be more to me than my salvation : Christ must be loved above all ; nay, were there no arms of mercy to receive me, no heaven of bliss to entertain me, no weight of glory to crown me, yet Christ must be loved above, and without all these. As it is a sign of a carnal love to follow Christ for the loaves ; so it is a sign of a base mercenary love, to seek Christ for a reward. That is but an adulterate affection that affects the present more than the party, loves the ring more than her beloved. That choice cannot be cordial, that aims
only

only at a portion : that love cannot be real, that aims only at a benefic. Lord, thou art amiable in thyself : O that I could love thee for thyself.

59. *The right Performance of Duty.*

I Must not venture on a duty, unless I bring God to it, nor rest satis-

fied, unless I carry God from it.

Hear *David's* precept, *O seek the LORD, and his strength, seek his face for evermore.* Be sure thou rise not

from duty, before the countenance of God rise in mercy upon thy soul.

It must be Christ that must fit thee, and it must be Christ that must meet

thee ; or else it will be no ordinance of comfort to thee. What is the

chariot, if thy beloved be not in it ?

Then hear *St. Bernard's* practice,

Lord ! I never come to thee without

thee : I never go from thee, but

with thee. O blessed be that soul

that never prays, hears or receives,

but carries Christ to all, enjoys Christ

in all, and brings Christ from all.

Lord!

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Lord! in all my approaches to thee,
let me go out in thy strength, and
return in thy presence.

60. *The Indwelling of Sin.*

O My soul! thou art always striving; yet sin always stirring: thou fearest the truth of grace, because thou findest the working of sin; but it will be always thus. Thou canst not come out of Egypt, but *Amalek* will lay wait in the way; the flesh will be sure to trouble thee, although it be never able to conquer thee: he therefore that sits down, and is at rest in sin, it is a sign that *Satan* is there, the strong man, because his kingdom is in peace: but where there is any work with Christ, there will be always war with sin. I know that while I live, *Sin* will have its being in my mortal body. The ivy will still be twisting about the house; there is no destroying of it, until the wall fall. *Sin* was the womb of *Death*, and only *Death* must be the tomb of *Sin*. God would have

have my soul humbled ; therefore though he hath broke my prison, yet he hath left the chain upon my feet. God would have my graces exercised ; therefore, though he hath translated me into the kingdom of life, yet he hath left the *Canaanite* in the land. God would have my faith exercised ; therefore *Goliath* still shews himself in the field, that so I might make-out to him in the name of the Lord : I will therefore unbuckle *Saul's* armour, humble mine own abilities, and betake me to the strength of Christ ; so though I cannot help the rebelling power of sin, yet I shall always hinder the ruling power of sin. As it shall be my griet, because sin will have its being, so it shall be my care, that it may never have its striving. Though sin may live in me, yet I will never live in sin.

My lust submits not to my will's command,

Can my soul's household thus divided stand ?

61. *Satan's Temptations.*

IMust not pray simply against temptations, though I may against the evil of temptation ; for a Christian may be tempted, and yet not overcome ; a castle may be assaulted, and yet not taken. If Satan inject an evil motion, and I reject it ; this is not mine, but the devil's sin : this shall be a shining jewel in my crown of victory, and as an aggravating *Item* in his day of judgment. Why art thou so terrified at the roaring of a lion, as if he could not rage, but he must devour ? Or as if grace and temptation would not stand together ? As if the same afflictions were not accomplished upon thy brethren ? This is an undoubted truth, that spiritual wickedness is to be found in the heavenliest places : and this is an excellent sign, that Satan takes thee for one that will tread upon his head, when he is so violent to bruise thy heel : and this is a
com-

comfortable assurance, that if Jesus Christ be thy captain to lead thee in, he will be thy champion to bring thee out; so that temptation shall be as a file to beautify thy soul, and as a sword to wound thine adversary. For my part, I know Satan will be always tempting, therefore I will be always watching; and what I cannot hinder, that I will be sure to hate: so shall it be my joy to fall into temptation, and the devil's misery to fall into his own pit.

62. *A Christian's Support under Afflictions.*

IT was proudly said by *Cæsar*, crossing (unknown) the sea, being in a little bark, in a tempestuous storm, when they were ready to be swallowed up by the waves, perceiving the courage of the pilot to fail, *Confide, scias te Cæsarem vebere*, Fear not, for thou carriest *Cæsar*. How truly may a gracious spirit say in the midst of all desertions, afflictions, and tribulations, Fear nothing,

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O my soul, thou carriest Jesus Christ! What though the windows of heaven be opened for a storm, or the fountains of the deep broke up for a flood, desertions from above, afflictions from below; yet God that sits in heaven will not cast away his son, Christ that lives in me will not let me sink: the swelling waves, I know, are but to set me nearer heaven, and the swelling deeps are but to make me awake my master. Prize thy Christ; they shall not drown thee, therefore cannot daunt me: for while I sail with Christ, I am sure to land with Christ.

*Lord, thou wilt keep me from being
run on shelves:*

*The devil only tempts but wretched
elves.*

*We oft turn devils, and so tempt our-
selves.*

63. *The Decrease of Grace,*

IF Satan cannot hinder the birth of graces, then he labours to be the death of graces. This is too ordinary

nary to see a Christian lose his first love, and to fall from his first works. This love that was formerly an ascending flame, always sparkling up to heaven, is now like a little spark, almost suffocated with the earth. The godly sorrow that was once a swelling torrent, like *Jordan* overflowing his banks, is now like *Job's* summer brook, which makes the traveller ashamed; his proceedings against sin, once furious, like the march of *Jebu* against *Abab*; but now, like *Sampson*, he can sleep in *Delilah's* lap, whilst she steals away his strength. Before, he could not give rest to his eyes, till God had given rest to his soul; but now he can lie down with sin in his bosom, and wounds in his conscience. At first, his zeal did eat him up, but now his decayings have eat up his zeal. How is thy excellency, O Christian, departed from thee! how is thy crown fallen from thy head! What a dangerous breach hast thou made for the entrance in of sin and sorrow? Temptations find thee wrecked, and leave thee wounded: thy graces that were

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once like the worthies of *David*, that could break through an host of enemies, and draw water at the well of salvation, are now like the soldiers that follow *Saul*, they are with thee trembling: thou hast potent enemies, but impotent graces; often assaulted, but easily conquered: and as thy glorious sun is setting, so are dismal clouds arising. Thou, O Christian, art decreasing in thy graces, and God is declining in his favours: thou drawest off communion with the saints, and God draws off communion from thy soul: thou offerest up thy sacrifices without the fire of zeal, and he answers thy coldness with the fire of wrath. In a word, thy spirit hath no delight in God, and God's soul hath no delight in thee: and as there is bad news from heaven, so there is sad news from conscience. What tremblings of heart! What astonishment of soul! What disputes against mercy! What questionings of salvation will thy wounded conscience and bleeding spirit raise! What flashes of lightning! What claps of thunder

thunder will break out upon thy soul, when the hot pangs of death shall be wrapt up in the cold and chill scruples of salvation! As I will therefore draw out my soul to praise God for grace implanted, so also will I put out my strength to serve God by grace improved; that as every hour sets me nearer my grave, so every action may set me nearer my heaven.

64. *The Danger of Hypocrisy.*

AN hypocrite is the devil's servant in God's livery, and therefore out of favour both in heaven and earth; for man seeth his livery, and therefore hateth him; and God sees his heart, and therefore will not own him: men see his outward sanctity, and therefore deride him; and God sees his inward hypocrisy, and therefore abhors him: so that he travels in the wilderness, and yet shall never rest in *Canaan*: when he comes to cast up the sum of all his labours, this he shall find to be the sum of them;

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them; instead of that blessed sentence of approbation, *Well done good and faithful servant*, he shall have that direful sentence of detestation, *Who both required this at your hands?* He that so cunningly deceived others, doth at last as foolishly beguile himself. In a word, he is a man that steals his damnation, and sweats to go to hell; so that the openly profane, and cunningly hypocritical, meet both there at last, only with this difference, the way the one goeth is through the gate, and the other slealeth through the postern. Lord! therefore whilst the hypocrite clothes himself with formality, clothe me with sincerity. It may be men will hate me; but I care not, so God love me; my duties may be full of imperfection; but yet they shall never want a gracious acceptance; my way may be in trouble, yet my rest shall be in glory.

65. *The Danger of Security.*

AS great serenity of weather is a presage of an earthquake and whirlwind, so great security of life is a great and sore prediction of the soul's earthquake, of trembling and astonishment of spirit. He that takes up formality, and sits down in security; he that lays his foundation in the sand, and there raises his building, the fall of that house will be great; and you may observe, that Christian that is only brought out of open profaneness into outward profession; that hath taken down the frame of his gross iniquity, to set up a superficial form of piety; that hath covered his face with a surface of religion; no soul so subject to fall into the sleep of death, as such a soul: for while he thinks himself well, he seeks not to be better; so that he slumbers away his time, until the cry at midnight, and then he startles, and awakes, and sees nothing but the bridge of mercy drawn up, and the gates

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gates of heaven shut in. See with what confidence these formalists in the gospel come unto Christ? they come under the relation of servants, and therefore they call upon him as their master: *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils? &c.* They made no question of salvation, but shew their works, as if they would command it for their wages. But hear Christ's answer, *Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you.* What, Lord, never knew us! that is strange! Have not we heard thy word, received thy sacraments, and relieved thy members, and spake for thee, and prayed to thee, and done many things in thy name, and yet didst thou never know us? No, says Christ, I never knew you, but with an utter and absolute rejection: I never knew you, I never did approve you in all your specious ways, and glorious shews, wherein you did so pride yourselves; because all was in formality, and nothing in sincerity; therefore depart from me. They little thought of such a sad expulsion,
such

such a direful separation. And thus the outside Christian, because he hath reformed in many things, and doth conform to many duties, therefore, with *Agag*, he concludes the bitterness of death is past; so he cloaths himself with smooth imaginations, and deceitful apprehensions, till he is hewn asunder before the Lord. I will not therefore in the least duty be formal, or in the least duty be secure, but with the blessed man be always fearing; for I had rather tremble here than startle in hell.

*While hell or death lodge in our breast,
Our hearts may sleep, but cannot rest.*

66. *The Evil of Sin.*

DO TH sin present itself, look upon it, as it must be with tears, or shall be in torments; if thou committest the least sin, and diest impenitent, thy soul is lost, and thy redemption ceateth for ever; or, if thou committest this sin, and doth repent, yet what cloudings of the
face

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face of God ! What breaking of the bones with *David* ! What bitter pangs ! What painful throws ! What shadows of death ! What terrors of hell may seize upon thee, before thou canst make thy peace, or settle thine assurance ! Wilt thou give way to sin, because it is delectable ? Or because it is pardonable ? Who loves poison, because it is sweet ? Or, who drinks poison, because he may have an antidote, seeing it will work to his trouble, if it work not out his life ! I have a precious soul, shall I lose it for a lust ? I have a gracious God, shall I venture him for a sin ? No, I will always reject that for which I am sure to lose my peace, likely to lose my soul.

67. *The Heavenly Traveller.*

WHAT heir, travelling to take possession of a rich inheritance, either lets a green meadow, or pleasant garden detain him, or a black cloud, or a foul way dishearten him ? O my soul ! thou art travelling to
take

take possession of a glorious inheritance among the saints, wilt thou turn aside to crop every flower? Wilt thou stand still to hear every melodious sound? Wilt thou leave thy way to drink of every gliding stream of carnal pleasures? What is this, but to view a meadow, and lose a manor? For a dying flower to part with an eternal crown? For a flying vanity, to lose an immortal felicity? To forsake the way of *Sion*, to gather one of the apples of *Sodom*? Or else, O my soul! What if thy way be in tears, and thy days in sorrow, all clouded, and a swelling sea, so that not only the lading of the ship, but the very life is in danger; yet here is enough to comfort thee, that a good father, and a large portion, a sweet rest, and an everlasting refreshment, will make amends for all. Therefore, vain world, promise not, for I will make no deviation, because my way lies to purer comforts, and surer glory: vexing world, threaten not, for I will make no retarding, because I am travelling

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to my Father's, to my country, to my happiness.

Heav'n is the prize that I desire to gain;

Let me so run then that I may obtain.

68. *Content the best Riches.*

AS the heart is, so is the estate. Riches are but cyphers, it is the mind that makes the sum. What am I the nearer for a great estate, if I am not contented with it? Desires of having will quickly eat up all the comforts and delights in possessing. Therefore, that *Alexander* that wants content, is worse than *Dio-genes* that is contented with his wants. It argued a rich mind in *Socrates*, the moral philosopher, when walking through a market, and beholding varieties of good commodities; yet could say, *Quam multis rebus ego non egeo!* How many things do I not want! But a richer mind in the disciples, that with a sweet complacency

ency of spirit, could acknowledge,
That as having nothing, yet possessing
all things. I see all would be
well, if my heart were well; I will
therefore form my heart to my estate,
so shall I have an estate according to
my heart.

*A man contented's greatly rich,
Possess of e'er so small;
But not contented, tho' most rich,
He poorest is of all.*

69. *The different Estate of good and
bad Men.*

WHEN I remember, saith one,
Job sitting on the dunghill,
John hungering in the wilderness,
St. Peter hanging on the gibbet, then
I think how severely will God pu-
nish hereafter those reprobates whom
he lothes, if he deals so sharply
with his children whom he loves;
if he do so much to his intimate
friends in the time of grace, what
will he do to his professed enemies in
the day of judgment? You there-

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fore that deride the miseries of the saints, O turn your jeers into fears, for hell sparkles out on earth. On the contrary, Lord! when I consider *Herod* in his pomp, *Haman* in his honour, *Abasuerus* at his feast, &c. then I think, if God drop so much into a vessel of wrath, what will he pour into a vessel of mercy? If God do so much for a slave on earth, what will he do in heaven for a son? Therefore, ye holy ones, that are so offended at the flourishing of the wicked, O leave your envy, and see your glory! for heaven lies above ground; as the adversity of the saints shall therefore give me a glimpse of hell, so the prosperity of the wicked shall give me a glance of heaven.

70. *The Privilege of the Elect.*

GOD hath made all things for his elect, and his elect for himself: All is yours, and you are Christ's. I will therefore serve my
God

of a Pious Soul. 89

God in all things, myself in nothing.

*Reign God in Christ, and put an
end to sin :*

*When shall the elected seed be all
brought in ?*

71. All Good derived from God.

THE creature hath a goodness in it, no further than it stands in reference to the chiefest good : if you cut the stream off from the fountain, it will quickly lose its sweetness and pureness, and itself at length : the comforts and enjoyments of the wicked, because they flow not from the spring of love, they are but like dainty channels mudded and imbittered with the wrath of God ; fading brooks, which at length will make the soul ashamed ; so that he which only enjoys the creature in itself, shall lose the creature and himself. The purest and the sweetest mercies only run in the rivulets, which are fed by the

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upper celestial springs of mercy ; therefore, O Lord ! whatsoever I enjoy, let it stream from the fountain of thy love, and flow to me in the blood of thy Son.

72. *Blessings from God must be used for God.*

AS the rivers which flow from the sea, run back again into the sea, so those blessings which come from God, must always be employed for God. What I have received from him in his mercy, he must have it back again in his glory : therefore, Lord ! whatever I enjoy, let me find thee in it, and serve thee with it.

73. *God to be loved for Himself.*

LOVE should always be the life of motion : *Amor meus pondus meum ; eo feror, quocunque feror* : That soul goes true that hath true love to weigh it ; and that soul loves truly, that

that hath a true object to centre it :
A gracious spirit loves the Lord,
not because he does good, but be-
cause he is good. I will not weigh
that friend's affection that loves a
fluent sweetness before an inherent
goodness. That soul that loves
Christ for himself, though you take
away all weights else, yet there is
strength enough in love to move and
constrain the soul. O blessed be
that saint, Lord, that is so taken
with thy love, that can truly say,
Were there neither heaven nor hell,
yet sin should be my hell, and ho-
liness my heaven.

74. *Life but a lingering Death.*

TO speak the truth, our life, what
is it but a vital death ? The poet
being asked, what he did ? answered
very well, *Paulatim morior*, I die
by little and little. We do but then
begin to live indeed, when we begin
to live to God ; our life before is
but a race to the sepulchre ; but when
we live to God, then we are in our
way

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way to eternity; as *Alexander*, when he reckoned up his age, counted not his years, but his victories; so when I take an account of my life, I will not reckon up my time, but my duties.

75. *The Soul's Threefold Estate.*

O Thou precious saint! Thou gracious soul! Three questions call for thy answer; thy answer for thy praise. 1. What wast thou? 2. What art thou? 3. What shalt thou be? 1. What wast thou? A rebel to thy God, a prodigal to thy father, a slave to thy lust, an alien from the commonwealth of *Israel*. 2. What art thou? The son of God, the spouse of Christ, the temple of the Holy Ghost, begotten of the immortal seed, born of the blood-royal of heaven, made free among the denizons of *Sion*, written among the living of *Jerusalem*. 3. What shalt thou be? A glorious saint, a companion of cherubims, a triumphant victor, a crowned king, and an attendant on the Lamb, where-so-
ever

ever he goeth; a spectator of those soul-ravishing and ineffable excellencies that are in God, the beholding of the King of Glory face to face, and enjoying immediate communion with Jesus Christ; nay more, made one with Jesus Christ, clothed with his excellencies, enthroned with his glories, crowned with his eternity, filled with his felicity. *The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them.* Oh! stand amazed at free grace. And seeing God hath made thy soul a vessel filled with his mercy, make thyself, thy life, a spring flowing with his praise.

76. *God to be seen in his Creatures.*

THE soul takes its rise from every creature to heaven; when I see the stars, Lord, I think if one star be of such magnitude, what are the dimensions of those heavens in which so many are fixed? Nay, how immense is that God, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain? When I see the sun, I think, if one
sun

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sun make such a glorious and illustrious day, what a glorious heaven will that be, wherein every saint shall be a sun, and every sun so far brighter than this, as this is brighter than our bodies? And yet all these suns are but a shadow to the Sun of Righteousness. Again, when I consider the rising sun, how by the perfection of his beams, he puts beauty, life, and joy upon the face of the whole creation, paints the flowers, gilds the corn, puts a flourish upon the plants, cheers and exhilarates the birds, and makes the valleys shout for joy: I then think, what shall be the shining beauty, and soul-ravishing delights of that soul, upon which the brightness of thy glory shall fully rise and rest, and into which the glorious splendour of thy beauty shall clearly shine to all eternity. And when I consider the air, this is my thought, That as here I cannot think at all, unless I draw in this air; so I cannot think well at all, except thou puttest goodness into my thoughts. Lord, when I view the variety of thy creatures,
and

and see one excel in beauty, another in strength, another in wisdom, another in love, and others in swiftness; Lord, I think these are but beams of thy brightness, and streams of thy fulness; as they had only their being from thy hand, so they have only their perfection in thy essence; here they are mixt, but there they are pure. How happy then shall that soul be, that enjoys all perfection in God, and God infinitely above all! Lord, I see stately buildings, shady groves, crystal brooks, and pleasant meadows; and yet perhaps a wicked man the owner: why then I think, if *Simeon* goes away with such a mess, what will *Benjamin's* portion be? If the children of the concubines have so large a gift, what shall be the inheritance of the son of promise? Again, when I look upon myself in temporals, Lord, I bless thee that I have convenient sufficiency, a goodly heritage; my tents are by the wells of *Elim*, my portion is from the hands of thy wisdom: and though corruption may think it of the least, yet wisdom it-
self

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sun make such a glorious and illustrious day, what a glorious heaven will that be, wherein every saint shall be a sun, and every sun so far brighter than this, as this is brighter than our bodies? And yet all these suns are but a shadow to the Sun of Righteousness. Again, when I consider the rising sun, how by the perfection of his beams, he puts beauty, life, and joy upon the face of the whole creation, paints the flowers, gilds the corn, puts a flourish upon the plants, cheers and exhilarates the birds, and makes the valleys shout for joy: I then think, what shall be the shining beauty, and soul-ravishing delights of that soul, upon which the brightness of thy glory shall fully rise and rest, and into which the glorious splendour of thy beauty shall clearly shine to all eternity. And when I consider the air, this is my thought, That as here I cannot think at all, unless I draw in this air; so I cannot think well at all, except thou puttest goodness into my thoughts. Lord, when I view the variety of thy creatures,
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self

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self knows it to be best. Now, Lord, if thou givest me so much in the time of my vanity, what wilt thou do for me in the day of my glory? But, above all, that sweet communion I enjoy with God, those glorious rays which shine from the face of Christ, those ravishing joys that flow from the wells of salvation, set me upon the top of mount *Nebo*, and give me the largest view of my happiness: for if the Lord give me so choice a mercy for my earnest, how rich a blessing shall I have for my inheritance? If this be the first-fruits, what shall be the full harvest? If the Lord lets me have such a glorious beam in my prison, what a glorious sun shall shine in my palace? If there be such a joy in the expectation of what I shall be, what a happiness shall there be in the consummation of what I shall be?

77. *The Soul made for the Enjoyment of God.*

ANAXAGORAS being asked, What he thought he was born for? answered,

swered, *Ut cœlum contemplar*, That I may meditate upon heaven. O my soul! what dost thou think thou wast re-born for? is it not that thou mayest live in heaven? God hath made thee to enjoy communion with himself; thou needest not stay one hour on earth, but with *Enoch*, spend thy days with God, walk and converse with Jesus Christ in the galleries of his love; with *Moses*, live on the mount of glory. Why then, my dear soul, art thou one hour out of heaven? O live so strictly, and walk so closely with God, that thou mayest say with *David*, *Whether I awake in the morning, or whether I walk abroad in the day, I am ever with thee.*

78. *The near Union between God and the Soul.*

LORD! how near wilt thou bring me to thyself? Must I abide in thee, and thou in me? Must we be of one soul, and of one spirit? Is it not enough that I must always re-
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pose myself in the bosom of thy sweetest affections, that I should always be inclosed in the embraces of thy choicest love, that I should be ever wrapt up in the bowels of thy tenderest mercies? But must I so dwell with thee, and wilt thou so dwell in me, as to be made an equal sharer in thy bliss, a partner in thy glory? What is man, that thou shouldst so regard him? What am I, that thou shouldst so remember me? Lord, let thy mercies so constrain me, that all my affections may run out unto thee, and all my strength may run out for thee.

79. *The Christian a spiritual Temple.*

EVERY real Christian is the spiritual temple of the living God; worldly cares and earthly desires are the buyers and the sellers that pollute this temple. Now, what an unworthy part is this, to make the house of God a den of thieves? What an idolatrous sin is this, to set up *Dagon* by the ark, a lust by Christ? Again,

Again, every member is a vessel of that temple; now, what a debasing thing is this, to take these golden vessels, with that drunken King, and employ them to a fordid use? To take that heart which should be filled with God, and fill it with lust? Those ears which should be always ready to hear what God shall speak, to lay them open to a detracting tale, a foolish jest? That tongue that should be setting out the praises, and must hereafter be singing forth that sweet triumphant hallelujah, for to defile it now with idle speeches, lying words? What a sacrilegious thing is this, to let forth God's vessels to sin, and good rooms to lust? O Lord, therefore what thou takest to be thy own, rule and use it as thy own.

80. *Right Performance of Duty.*

MY duties are then upright with God, when they turn me into the very nature of themselves. It was St. *Hierom's* praise of *Nepolitan*,

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That by his continual reading, and daily meditation, he made his breast the very library of Christ. This is the praise of a Christian, when he shall so hear, that the word abideth in him ; that it is, as it were, incorporated into him; when he shall so read as that he shall make himself a living epistle, so that the world may read, again in his life, what he hath read before in the world ; when he shall so bless God, as to make himself his praise ; when he shall so pray, as that every petition shall, as so many living veins, run through his practice ; when his duties shall be the fire, and his life the incense ; this is the only sweet acceptable sacrifice : till worship is distilled into practice it is but an empty cloud : till duties are as vitals in our walkings, they are but dead performances. Lord, therefore let my duties receive life from thy spirit, and let my walkings receive life from those duties.

81. *The Evil of the Heart, or an evil Heart.*

I Read of *Basil*, that he persuaded himself, if he were in the wilderness, free from the company of men, he should be happy, and serve God more devoutly; but when he came there, he said, I have forsaken all things, but yet I retain my old heart. I have often sought the privatest place of duty, and have often prest to hear the best men, and to enjoy the best means, thinking to have gained much ground in the advantages of the place, and of the ordinance; and yet, Lord, I have got but little good, because I still carry with me a bad heart. This is then that *Remora* that stays my ship in its course to heaven. So that I find it is not he (with St. *Basil*) that treads the path of retiredness, that grows in grace, but he that (with that Father) walks first into the cloisters of his own heart, in the secret places and crooked turnings

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of his own spirit. It is not he that comes to the pure ordinances, that advances his communion with God; but it is he that brings a pure heart. Lord, I have often searched my heart, and still my heart deceiveth me in the search. O come and fit my heart for every duty, that every duty may be fit for thyself.

32. *The Christian's daily Warfare.*

PRINCES combat with flesh and blood, Christians wrestle with principalities and powers; their wars give days of truce; ours not a minute of cessation. Conditions of peace there may cause retreat; nothing but death here can raise the siege. Kings, if overcome, may save themselves by flight: but Christians may as soon fly from themselves as from their enemies. Whatsoever may make a battle dangerous, here it is, whether policy, potency, cruelty, or perpetuity. Not only the powers of earth, but all the forces and stratagems of hell are always

always charged upon thy soul; so that a Christian is not in a garrison of rest, but in a field of conflict, and he cannot let fall his hands, but *A-malek* prevails. Not to be a conqueror, is to be a prisoner; not to win the field, is to lose the soul. Security wounds thee, yielding kills thee, nothing but victory crowns thee: therefore watch, as for thy life; fight, as for thy soul; the time will come, these enemies thou seest to day, thou shalt see them no more for ever: when thou shalt lay down thy sword, and take up thy palm, and solemnize thy victory in glory to perpetuity. A certain man rehearsing a sad oration to *Aristotle*, in praise of those that were slain in the wars by the *Lacedæmonians*, received this answer from him, *Quales igitur nostros esse putas, qui istos vicerunt?* If those were such brave and valiant men, what dost thou think that we are that overcame those? What though now we read a sad relation of the potency and policy of our enemies, and find the heavy experience of it; yet how glorious and
vic-

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victorious dost thou think we shall one day be, when, in the strength of Christ, we shall have overcome those enemies? What though my assaults be many, my enemies mighty, if God strengthen me, I have enough to comfort me; for the greater my enemy, the more glorious my victory; and the more glorious my victory, the more triumphant my glory.

83. Of Godly and Worldly Sorrow.

I Have seen some Christians, that for ordinary losses have been inordinate in their mourning, as if not only the stream, but the fountain had been exhausted; whereas, if the understanding part of the soul did truly act itself, it would reason thus: "What, must the stream of my sorrow run altogether in this channel? Is there no mourning to be made for sin? What, shall I suffer my heart to swim away in tears? Are there no duties to be performed for God? And do I not know that a sad heart cannot serve a good God?"

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I have lost the creature, but I must keep my God; I have parted with an outward comfort, but I shall meet it again with advantage in Jesus Christ; I have lost something; were it more, were it all, so that I were not the owner of any thing, yet enjoying Christ, I should be the possessor of all things; the failing stream shall but therefore send me to the flowing fountain." Thus, did the soul put forth itself, it would quickly sweeten those bitter waters, and presently turn those tears into ditties. For my part, I will mourn for the loss of the creature, but it shall be in the cause, which is sin; so shall my sorrow be godly, and not worldly: and I will never be satisfied, till I make good the absence of the creature, but it shall be in the fountain, which is Christ, so shall it be a gain, and not a loss.

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84. *Benefit of Adversity.*

IT is observed as a point of wisdom in husbandry, to set those plants together that have an antipathy in their nature, and draw several juices out of the earth; therefore it is thought, a rose set by garlick is sweeter, because the more fetid juice of the earth goes into the garlick, and the more odorate into the rose; I am sure it is true in spirituals: therefore I wonder not why afflictions are the portion of the righteous, for I see prosperity is too strong a sucker to exhaust and steal the spiritual sap and celestial vigour of the soul, and so to debilitate the principles of growth and life. Whereas adversity hath a contrary extraction; it only draws out what may be malignant, and leaves behind it what may be for nourishment; it takes the dregs, and leaves the spirits, whereby the soul is elevated, and made more fruitful in the works of holiness. Therefore, Lord, so
I may

I may but grow, if the flowers of the world be too succulent, transplant me among the briars.

85. *Variety of a Christian's Condition.*

WHEN I look up to heaven, how oft do I both see the sun shine and set? When I look down into my soul, how oft do I see my comfort rise and fall? Eye but that ship which now seems to touch the clouds, and you shall see it in the deep anon, as if it would be swallowed by the waves. One while a Christian is upon mount *Taber*, and hath a glance of heaven: another while lies in the valley of *Bockim*, weeping because he hath lost the sight of his country: *Joshua's* long day is many times turned into *Paul's* sad night. God would quicken our affections; therefore now and then he gives us a glance of heaven, that so we might be in love with that we see; and now and then he draws a black veil over that bright vision, that so we might not loath what we did

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did love. He suffers our happiness here to be imperfect, that so we may be pressing on to that place where we shall be perfectly happy. Lord, when thou shewest thyself, let me love thee; and when thou withdrawest thyself, let me follow thee; and under all these changes here, let my soul be always breathing, panting, longing, and reaching after thee, till I shall so perfectly enjoy thee, that I may never lose thee.

86. *God's Presence makes all Conditions comfortable.*

WHERE the King is, there is the court; and where the presence of God is, there is heaven. Art thou in prison with *St. Paul* and *Silas*, if God be with thee thou wilt sing thy hallelujahs. Art thou at the stake with blessed martyrs; as the beams of the sun put out the fire, so the beams of God's countenance put out the flames, and turn their troubles into comforts; so that it is but winking, and thou art in heaven.

heaven. Therefore that soul that enjoys the Lord, though it may want the sun or moon to shine in creature comforts, worldly delights to solace it; yet it needs them not, for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof; God himself irradiates it with the brightness of his beauty, and Christ himself fills it with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Thus God brings his heaven with him, and that man that enjoys God, carries heaven about him; so that here is his happiness; cast him in the dungeon, in a furnace, where you please, yet he is still in heaven. Therefore, for my part, Lord, give me thyself, and then deal how thou pleasest with me.

87. *The miserable End of wicked Men.*

MARK the wicked man, though his *Intrat* may be comical, his *Exit* is always tragical. *Belshazzar* in his first scene is revelling out his time in sin and pleasure, feasting
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and carousing with his concubines in the vessels of the Lord; but view him in the catastrophe, and you shall find the hand-writing, and him trembling, *Darius* rending away his kingdom, and death snatching away his life. If you look upon the entrance of a wicked man, his gates are riches, his seats honour, his paths pleasures: he goes delicately, fares deliciously every day, he hath more than heart can wish: but wait his going out, and see a sad conclusion, in a moment he goes down to hell. The man is cast out from God as an everlasting curse: destruction closes her mouth upon him, and his place beholds him no more; his body is wrapt in the dust, his soul is buried in the flames, and his name is covered with darkness. But now, behold the perfect man, it may be thou mayest see a few tragical scenes, the world hating, mocking, persecuting him; but *the end of that man is peace*. Though he may come forth weeping, yet he goes off rejoicing; though he came forth combating, yet he goes out triumphing, so that the saints and angels
clap

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clap their hands for joy. When I therefore judge of a happy man, I'll wait his end, I care not for his entrance.

88. *Deceitful Riches leave us at our Death, but our good Works follow us.*

EARTHLY riches, were they true riches, yet they are not ours, or were they ours, yet they were not true, because they are unuseful to the soul. Nay, for the most part, our golden heaps are but the miserable spoils of precious souls: *Dives aut malus est, aut hæres mali.* And then they are not ours, because we cannot carry them with us when we leave the world: *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee,* &c. and then thou shalt quickly know whose thy soul shall be, which thou hast by those things so sinfully abused; but thou shalt never know whose these things shall be, which thou hast so miserably provided.

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When we awake at the last day, we shall find nothing of all those things in our hands. Those things that are of the world (saith St. *Ambrose*) we shall leave them behind us in the world, only virtue is the companion of the dead. Those things shall fail us, but our good works shall follow us, and abide with us for ever. Woulst thou be truly rich? be not only in getting of goods, but in doing of good, raise virtues out of vanity; so shalt thou lay up goods indeed for eternity.

89. *A Competency better than Abundance.*

I Have not far to my home, therefore I need not make much provision for my way; food and raiment will be sufficient for my journey, superfluity will but prove a burden. While *Jacob* had only his staff, he went on freely in his way; but when he had his flocks and herds, he drives but slowly. We see it daily, that rich men either lose their paths,

paths, or ride but little ground; while poor men run the ways of God's commandments. I am well enough, if I have but enough to carry me well to heaven. I will therefore desire no more than what will mend my pace, and serve me in my journey.

90. *Serve God in the Use of Means.*

WE must not presume upon the means without God; nor upon God without the means: not upon the means without God, because the pipe cannot convey, except the spring communicates: not upon God without the means, because the goings-forth of Providence are always in the paths of diligence. Therefore in the assault of *Amalek*, whilst *Moses* goes to prayer, *Joshua* must go and fight: so the proceedings of a Christian's faith should always be upon the mount, and industry in the valley: while the heart is lifted up, the hand should be stretched

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stretched out. He only may rest in God, that hath been restless in the means. He that can fully lay out himself in God's way, may confidently lay up his faith in God's providence. I must sow my seed, and wait upon the clouds; do my work, and leave the event to God: I must neither be idle in the means, nor make an idol of the means: I will therefore henceforth lay my hands to the means, as if they were all in all; and yet raise my eye above the means, as if they were nothing at all.

91. *The Excellency of a Christian.*

CICERO spake at random, when he said, *Ad decus & libertatem nati sumus*, we are born to liberty and honour. It is thou, O regenerate soul, that art born a child of love, and heir of glory; thou art he, O rexcellent saint! that art cloathed with the sun, and crowned with the stars, and reckoned among the angels of God. O think
upon

upon thy dignity, and consider, will an emperor live like a beggar? Is it a becoming thing for those that are cloathed in scarlet, to embrace a dung-hill? Am I born of God, and shall I live like a man? Hath God raised my spirits with the highest excellencies, and shall I stain my nobleness with poor empty vanities? May I feed upon Christ, and shall I feed upon dust? Shall I sit to judge the world, and shall I be a drudge to the world? Hath Christ prepared for me a mansion in the heavens, and shall I be grovelling in the earth? Am I a child of light, and shall I commit the works of darkness? No, (as *Seneca* says) I am born to great and higher things, than to be a slave unto lust, or a drudge unto the world.

92. *Divine Love.*

PURE love runs clearly out of itself into the bosom of the object that is beloved. - Heavenly love centres no lower than heaven itself; it is only God it loves, and it is only
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in God it lives. If love is a beam, it is only as it stands in reference to the sun; if it love the creature, it is only as it's a step to advance it nearer God. Lord, I would not care for Heaven, were it not for thee; neither would I love myself were I not in thee.

93. *The Soul's Rest.*

HEAVEN is the very element, and Christ is the centre of every gracious soul; heaven only is the breathing-place, and Christ only is the resting-place: there's the place of its respiration, and here's the seat of its repose: it cannot live out of that element, and it cannot rest out of this centre; it is always struggling till it gets to heaven, always rolling till it comes to Christ. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul,* said David. Lord, let me draw no breath, but that which I fetch from heaven; and never let me rest till I rest in thee.

94. *The*

94. *The Soul's Progress.*

I See man is not only contented with a being, but is still aspiring to an eminency in that being ; as plants are continually growing up, till they come to that maturity which makes them perfect ; so man, he is always pressing forward, till he come to his proposed end, he thinks will make him happy. O my soul, God is thy end and excellency, and thy happiness lies in moving forward, till thou come to thy perfection. Be thou always rising until thou comest to rest in the bosom of the Lord.

95. *The Soul's Resemblance of Christ.*

THE closer association that we have here with Christ, the nearer assimilation we shall have to Christ. *Moses* did but talk with God, and how did his face shine with a beam of God ? You may quickly know a soul that doth converse, and is familiar

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familiar with Jesus Christ: you shall see it shining forth with the glories of Christ; as wisdom makes the face to shine, so Jesus Christ makes the soul to shine; so that he that judiciously looks upon him, can divine that soul hath met with, and seen the Lord. I see by the strong reflex of the beams of righteousness, that he hath been long in viewing of the sun of righteousness; he carries the very image of Christ upon him, and the very beauties of Christ about him; he looks like Christ, speaks like Christ, walks like Christ, he lives like Christ, he is just like Christ, and knows he comes from Christ. That soul that is always beholding the glory of the Lord, shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory. If that soul be so glorious that beholds God darkly, reflexively, as in a glass, and enjoys God at a distance; how glorious shall that soul be, that shall see him clearly and directly face to face, and enjoy his immediate communion with Jesus Christ? We shall then be like him indeed, when we shall

shall see him as he is: our bodies shall be like his; our souls shall be like his; our glory shall be like his; our eternity shall be like his, who is the God of beauty, excellency, and sweetness, concord, happiness and eternity. O Lord, let me have such clear visions, such sweet fruition of thee, that I may not only hereafter be happy, as thou art happy, but may likewise now be holy, as thou art holy.

96. *The Life of Faith.*

THE life of faith is the noblest, richest, contentedest, easiest, truest life of all. It is the noblest life; for it takes the soul out of the house of *Adam*, and carries it into the household of God: it makes the soul forget her father's house, and espouse it to the King of Glory. And then it is the pleasantest life; it lives upon the choicest excellency, and highest felicity, often wrapt up in the third heaven to take its repast in inexpressible glory; it walks in
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the paths of pleasantness, and under all the heats of troubles and afflictions, it shades itself under the arbor of paradise. And then it is the richest life; if our desires be according to our wants, it is impossible we should want above what we desire. *Tantum quisque habet quantum credit*, Every man hath (saith a Father) according to his faith; and, *Be it unto thee, according to thy faith*, saith Christ. And then it is the contentedest life; it carries the fading creature, and lays him upon Christ, and, under all mutability, still holds fast all-sufficiency, and so sits down contentedly. Then it is the easiest life; faith looks not on the strictness or difficulty of duty, but on the power and strength of Christ, therefore, if it meet with a hard precept, it dissolves into a sweet promise, it carries it to a living Christ, pleads it out till he hath drawn out a proportionable strength to facilitate and make easy the duty. In fine, it is the truest and the onliest life; for he is dead in sin, that doth not live by faith: therefore, as one said,

said, *Non vivere sed valere, vita est*, Not to live, but to be well, is life; so may I say, Not to live well only, but to believe, is to live, and to live well indeed.

97. *The wise Choice.*

IF God be the highest perfection in himself, and the highest good to the creature, then it is the highest wisdom of the creature to chuse him, and the highest piece of his duty to live in observance of God. If all creatures must certainly appear before this great Majesty, and bow unto him, I admire the wisdom of the godly, and wonder at the folly of the wicked. And seeing this certainly, and of necessity must be, Lord, let me be of the number of those that chuse thee here, so as for ever hereafter I may enjoy thee; and not of the number of those that refuse thee here, and must for ever hereafter be separated from thee.

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98. *Grace only shall enter Heaven.*

GRACES are the very courtiers of heaven, those wait upon Christ in his privy - chamber. Honour, riches, credit, and the like, may do much below, you may keep out your betters here, but in the palace of the King of Glory, you must stand by for ever. It is only faith, love, humility, and the like, that shall have admittance into the presence-chamber; moral virtues, you must likewise walk without. All that go bravely are not qualified for such a presence; you are but *splendida peccata*, beautiful abominations, base hearts wrapped up in brave cloaths, parts, and gifts; you may stay and wait at the gates, but I can tell you there is a special command gone forth, that none but grace and holiness shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; therefore you may receive your answer, if you please. Only these are welcome to the King of Glory, only these are familiar in
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conversation with Jesus Christ. Therefore, as the Queen of *Sheba* said of the servants of *Solomon*, so may I say of the graces of God's spirit, which are only the retainers of Jesus Christ, Oh, happy are these thy men, and happy are these thy servants, O God, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom, and see thy glory! True love doth not only preserve every heavenly motion of the soul, but raiseth the soul itself to the highest perfection. The more I love, the more I shall be beloved, and the fuller participation shall I have of him, who is altogether lovely. St. *Bernard* speaks fully to it, *Summum bonum amare est summa beatitudo*, to love the chiefest good is the greatest happiness. The purest and the fullest love shall always wear the weightiest crown of glory. Lord, perfect this grace in me, that so I may be perfect in loving thee.

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99. *Death vanquished.*

THE *Israelites* must first pass over *Jordan*, before they land in *Canaan*; but no sooner did the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant rest in the water, but the proud waves saw it and fled, and the swelling streams were driven back, and laid in heaps, to make them pass over safe and well; so every child of God is like an *Israelite* in the wilderness of this world, travelling to the land of promise; death is that *Jordan* that runs between this wilderness and our *Canaan*; it is that swelling stream that overflows the banks of every mortal creature; it is that last river which must be passed over: but this is the happiness of a child of God, that Jesus Christ our High-Priest, that bears the everlasting covenant on his shoulders, hath already dipt his feet in the brims of this water, insomuch that the streams of bitterness are diverted, the sting of death plucked out,

out, the water of the salt-sea is dried up, and the power of the curse cut off, so that death is but a sure step unto glory. Why then am I afraid to die? The channel is dry, and I see the footsteps of my Saviour in the bottom, and heaven and happiness on the other side; so that the waters shall not go over my soul: they may go over my sins, they may go over my miseries, they may go over my troubles; but my soul shall go over to its rest. Lord, therefore fit and sanctify me for my removal, and then take down my tent, I cannot be too soon with thee.

100. *The Happiness of another World.*

HERE the vessel is too capacious to be filled with all the pleasures and delights the world can lay together; but hereafter our pleasures and delights shall be too full for the most capacious vessel to comprehend; our glory shall be so great, that power, as well as goodness, shall come
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forth from God himself, for to renew and enlarge these vessels, that so they may be capable to receive and retain that glory. Strength and love shall go forth together, for to prepare and raise our dispositions, that they may be suitable for such a transcendent and high condition. We are too weak for such a weight of glory; therefore God will bear us up, that we may bear up it; and because our joys cannot fully enter into us, we shall fully enter into them. Who would then set so large a vessel as the soul under a few drops of carnal pleasure, and neglect the spring and spouts of everlasting joy! O my soul! what a glorious day is there coming, when the vessels of mercy shall be cast into the ocean of mercy, and be filled to the brim with mercy? When the sons of pleasure shall drink their fills at the torrents of pleasures, and be set for ever at rest in the rivers of pleasures? When the soul that is sick of love, shall lie in the bosom of love, and for ever take its fill of love? When the children of God shall have a full fruition

fruition of God, and be for ever satisfied with the presence of God; the joy of which glorious presence, the fulness of which joy, the sweetness of which fulness, the eternity of which sweetness, the heart of man in its largest thoughts cannot conceive. Lord, let the thoughts of the joy and glory which thou hast prepared for me in the heavens, turn away my soul from the pleasures and delights which are presented to me on earth; that so neglecting them, I may be pressing to thee, and breathing forth with thine, *O when shall I come and appear before God?*



PIOUS REFLECTIONS

O F A

Devout Reader.

AND now being *refreshed* with these *fragrant leaves*, what shall I say? *Blessed Author!* Art thou yet alive? Breathe longer in this fruitful air, and extract more out of so rich a stock. A scribe so well instructed cannot have spent all, but must have new or old to bring out of his treasure. Do not hide, but improve thy *talent*. Be not only a good and a wise, but faithful steward, and yield us more of thy pleasant fruits. Thou hast begun well, who! what should hinder thee? Thy present (were there no succeeding) reward, is spure enough to future work. Religion is recreation, and heaven is the way to heaven, good men are there on this side the grave. Thy longing soul was still peeping into it, and sending thy thoughts as spies

spies to view this promised land. But art thou at rest from thy labours? This (among others) thy work follows thee, and hath here erected thy lasting monument. Wherever thou wert buried, obscurity shall not follow thee. Every good heart that knew thee is thy tomb, and every tongue writes thee an epitaph; good men speak well of thee, but above all, God delights in thee. Thy thoughts were still flattering upwards, richly fraught with *Divine Breathings*, and ever aspiring, till unlading themselves in the bosom of thy Beloved. We are hugely thankful that a few drops fell from thee, for the comfort and example of fainting sluggish mortals below. Thou livest indeed, while most live only in shew, and hast changed thy place, but not thy company. Blush and be ashamed, my drowsy soul, at the sight or thought of such active Christians. These are redeeming time, whilst thou art mispending it; these are working, and thou loitering; these are conversing with God, whilst thou art following or trifling in the world;

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world; these are digging in scripture mines, whilst thou passest over them as barren empty things; backward to read, slow to hear, most averse to ruminate on the word. *David* meditated in it day and night, but thou scarce day or night. Shall God be to thee hereafter all in all; and here as nothing at all; have all thy thoughts then, and be afforded so few now? Is he thy portion, and wilt thou live no more upon him? Thy treasure and thy heart so seldom with him? Is there so much in God and his attributes, in Christ and his offices, in the Spirit and his working, in the law and its exactness, in the gospel and its sweetness, in grace and its excellency, in the world and its vanity, in the guilt of sin, in the beauty of holiness, in the preciousness of the soul, in the paucity that shall be saved, in the frailty of life, in the certainty of death, in the torments of hell, in the happiness of heaven, in the unalterableness of judgment? And art thou barren in so fruitful a soil? Only a cumberer of the ground, notwithstanding all the cost bestowed

bestowed upon thee? O see thou be not only alive, but a lively Christian. Canst thou think of an eternal weight of glory, and rest contented with a little work? Who ever served God for nought? Hath he not passed his word to make thee amends for all thou canst do or suffer for his sake? What harm is there in an heavenly life? What dishonour in adoring thy Maker? What great danger in being strictly religious? What discomfort to live and die in the sense of God's favour? Where is thy best friend? What is thy chief interest? What wilt thou wish upon a dying bed? Who doth, or who can do most for thee? What into another world will accompany thee? O live in the sense of dreadful, happy eternity, and of the difference to stand with boldness before the judge, when the careless world shall stand trembling: let heaven be always in thy eye, the world under thy feet, Christ nearest thy heart, the last trump in thy ear, the work (the word) of God in thy hand, and his praises continually in thy lips. Listen, what yellings under thee! hark, what acclamations
over

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over thee! Look round, what snares are laid for thee! Behold whose eye is upon thee, what haste death makes towards thee! How near thy course is finishing! See who stands holding thy sparkling crown; how the wicked would die like thee, how the devils for envy grin at thee, how the angels rejoice over thee, stand round thee, and long to be carrying thee; thy Father will be no longer without thee. Yet a little while and God shall wipe away all tears, turn every holy desire into an embracement, every prayer into a song of praise, every sigh into an hallelujah, every tear into a pearl, every stone of reproach into a diamond in thy glittering crown, reflection into possession, faith into vision, hope into fruition, the glass into face; for we shall see him as he is: to whom be glory for ever.
Amen.

F I N I S.

